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CONTENTS


| | Page |
|---|---|
| COMMENTS | 197 |
| LIFE IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES | 199 |
| SIR OLIVER LODGE AND THE EVIDENCE FOR SURVIVAL | 201 |
| A LONDON DIARY | 202 |
| THIS ENGLAND | 203 |
| WHOSE LEBENSRAUM? By Joan Griffin | 203 |
| ON BUYING A LEMON. By Y. Y. | 204 |
| NOTHING ALIEN IS HUMAN. By Sagittarius | 205 |
| BANKING ON DEATH. By Lennox Robinson | 205 |
| RECOLLECTIONS OF TROTSKY. By H. N. Brailsford | 206 |
| PLAYS AND PICTURES | 207 |
| CORRESPONDENCE | 207 |
| From E. Zangwill; J. P. McNulty; C. E. M. Joad; L. B. Pekin; H. G. Wells and Others; E. F. Pennison; M. Bishop; Schiff; H. D. Waley. | |
| BOOKS IN GENERAL. By V. S. Pritchett | 210 |
| REVIEWS: | |
| A Self-Made Patrician. By Richard Coventry | 211 |
| Reviews—*contd.* | Page |
| The Ladies. By Desmond Hawkins | 212 |
| Wise Man and Fool. By Stephen Spender | 214 |
| The Spanish War. By Kingsley Martin | 215 |
| Christian Philosophy. By C. E. M. Joad | 216 |
| SHORTER NOTICE | 216 |
| GRAMOPHONE NOTES. By Edward Sackville West | 216 |
| WEEK-END COMPETITIONS | 218 |
| THE WEEK IN THE CITY. By Cynicus | 219 |


## THE WAR IN THE AIR

GERMAN tactics have changed once more. *Blitzkrieg* methods were no doubt proving too costly in relation to the results achieved, and the Nazi High Command has decided to follow the example of our own raids on Germany, operating chiefly by night and using only small formations. The increase in effectiveness of this week's raids is not disputed. They have had a nuisance value, owing to the wearisome length of the air-raid warnings, and in some cases military objectives have been hit. By our own experience we are beginning to have some idea of what the people of Germany have been enduring for many weeks. Even if we discount official optimism, there is no doubt the damage done by the Germans is small in comparison with that caused by our own airmen, with their far greater experience of night-flying. In this type of warfare it is we who took the initiative, and the Nazis are as yet but clumsy imitators.

Until the equinoctial tides in the middle of September are over, we cannot pretend that the danger of invasion has diminished. But already we may assert that at present the Nazi aerial tactics, like our own, are better adapted to a long war of attrition than to a campaign designed to finish off the enemy by a single decisive blow. In any case, it is of paramount importance to consider at once the methods of maintaining civilian health and morale under the new conditions. The immediate problems are two: first, the organisation of air-raid warnings and, secondly, the character of the communiques issued to the public. The present system of warnings has not proved satisfactory. This is largely due to lack of liaison between the Air Ministry and the Ministry of Home Security. The former decides when the sirens shall be sounded, and, we understand, only gives the order when one of its officials announces an "incident." If an air-raid warden or a Home Guard sees a bomb drop or a German aeroplane overhead that is not sufficient for the Air Ministry: the incident simply has not occurred, if it has not been seen by its own people. This departmental nonsense should stop at once, if public confidence in the sirens is not to be destroyed. In the second place, we believe that all the Departments concerned misjudge the mood of the British public in veiling civilian casualties under a curtain of empty phrases. A district, which has suffered severely, feels that insult has been added to injury if its casualties are described as trifling. One instance may illustrate this point. During a raid on a S.E. coast town a bomb was dropped on a football field while a match was in progress between the Army and the Navy, and many of the players were killed. The Broadcast communique made light of the casualties, thereby infuriating not only the civilians who were watching but members of the Services as well. To state the truth in this case could not possibly have assisted the enemy: to suppress it weakens morale and the credit not only of the B.B.C. but also of the Government. A full account of such sensational incidents should be given to the public. The British people can "take it": what they cannot stand is being taken in. We also strongly favour a suggestion made in our correspondence columns for a Civilian Roll of Honour in this war where the Home Front is also the Front Line.

Lastly, we would urge the need for reviewing the suitability of our present air-raid shelters to a winter war. The Anderson shelters have proved themselves far better than the surface shelters now being erected. What is to happen to them when heavy rain begins? How are they to be warmed and drained? The public needs guidance on those matters in the near future. We also believe that in certain key factories the possibility of deep shelters, where workers can sleep if need be, should again be considered. "Deep shelters" became unfortunately a political issue: but the provision of adequate security for the population is now a vital part of our war strategy. Failure here may produce not only disastrous epidemics but a mood of defeatism.

### The Rumanian Frontiers

Even the shadow of the *Diktat* has not brought Hungary and Rumania to terms. Hungary has presented demands which, even to those familiar with the blind and arrogant cupidity of Magyar policy, are startling. She proposes that the basis of discussion should be

the River Maros, the line imposed at the Armistice in November, 1918, by General Franchet d'Esperey for purely military reasons. It cannot be justified either ethnographically, economically, geographically or strategically, and whilst it would transfer to Hungary the greater part of the Rumanian population of Transylvania and most of its leading towns, it would still leave under Rumania a solid block of at least 450,000 Magyars. The Rumanian counter-proposals for the cession of a frontier strip and an exchange of populations can never satisfy the Hungarians, yet it is becoming clearer and clearer that no Rumanian government can offer more. The loss of Bessarabia and the Northern Bukovina has caused bitter resentment, especially because of the millions which had been wrung from the nation for their defence, but neither of them can be compared in importance with Transylvania. The Gigurtu Government, which has now lost what little authority it ever possessed, cannot afford to compromise with Budapest. Nor can it strengthen its own ranks, since three of its four Iron Guard members have already been expelled by the Iron Guard, and even fifth-rate Transylvanian politicians have refused to join it. It seems clear that King Carol must dismiss Gigurtu and form a government of resistance led by his *bête noire*, the National Peasant leader Maniu, unless he is prepared to face both invasion and civil war. The Rumanian people have now realised that their rulers' policy of friendship with the Axis has led to the loss of Rumanian territory, and to nothing more.

### A Gain in Africa

The collapse of French resistance in North Africa and Syria has not discouraged General de Gaulle, and this week he was able to announce a first success in the French Empire, which has considerable military importance. The French colony of Lake Tchad in the heart of equatorial Africa has declared for Free France. As it lies between Nigeria and the Sudan, its decision gives us a clear air-route from the Atlantic to the Nile, which should be valuable if the Italians carry their threat to the Sudan any farther. As it also adjoins the southern deserts of Libya, it could have helped the enemy, had it capitulated. The General has received from Mr. Churchill a message that may greatly help him in his efforts to win other wavering colonies, for it contained an offer to give them financial help, so long as the war continues, on the principles and on the scale that we apply to our own colonies. Spirited groups of Frenchmen are still arriving in outlying places to continue the struggle: a group from Syria has now joined our forces for the defence of Egypt. The political manoeuvres that are still distracting Cairo on the eve of the expected Italian invasion give rise to some anxiety. The resignation of the Premier, Hassan Sabry Pasha, was announced this week and then denied. It may be the case that he is merely reshuffling the portfolios of his Cabinet and that nothing more is involved than the play of rival parties. The Wafd, once the dominant popular party, may be asking for greater influence. These dissensions may turn only on the jealousies of individuals and groups and their uneasy relations with the King, but with the enemy at the gate they are none the less disturbing. The best news from this part of the world is that our fleet and air-arm still score successes against the forces massed in Libya for the offensive so often threatened and so often postponed.

### Mr. Norman and Dr. Funk

The tenth annual report of the Bank of International Settlements' issued from an Alpine village, to which the Bank has now retreated before the tide of Nazism, still lists Mr. Norman and Dr. Funk side by side as directors under the chairmanship of another Bank of England director, Sir Otto Niemeyer. Two bankers from Berlin, three from Rome and others from Paris, Cologne, Zurich and Amsterdam, sit as their colleagues. Naturally the B.I.S., which once provided so convenient a meeting place for international bankers to exchange views on appeasement and congratulate each other on the existence of Hitlerism as a bulwark against Bolshevism, does not any longer hold its cosy directors' meetings. Mr. Norman does not sit down side by side with Hitler's Dr. Funk and talk about the place of banking in Hitler's new economic order for the continent of Europe. The connection between the British bankers and those of Berlin, Rome and the conquered capitals of Europe is only a paper one. Even so it would be more seemly, to say the least, if the connection were broken, particularly as the board of the B.I.S., despite its British chairman, is now completely dominated by Nazis and Nazi-controlled persons in conquered territories who hold an absolute majority of the seats. Continued British participation in the Bank is, in such circumstances, deplorable, particularly as its annual reports are apparently to continue throughout the war and to carry with them the signatures and presumably the approval of all the directors, British and Nazi alike. That may be good propaganda for Hitler. It is certainly bad propaganda for us.

### Our Captive Allies

Five changes and three additions have been made since the first White Paper on "enemy aliens." The upper age limit of internment is lowered from 70 to 65; boys between 16 and 18 may now be released, provided the Home Office agrees in each case, if they live with their parents and not merely, as formerly, with British families or at school; those falling under the various employment categories are no longer required to work for their previous employer; the work of scientists, research workers, etc., must be "important" instead of "of national importance"; workers in refugee organisation must be "cases in which the loss of the alien's services is seriously hampering the work of the organisation," where formerly they were required to be "key workers." The additions are the new category 19, intended or purporting to cover known anti-Nazis, the promise that "B" cases not already reviewed by Regional Advisory Committees may apply for release on the same condition as the "C" category, and the undertaking that "the same categories of eligibility for release will apply, so far as applicable, to Italian internees."

There are still far too many obstacles in the way of release. The anti-Nazis must satisfy another tribunal, and it remains to be seen how it will interpret its task. Will long periods of imprisonment and torture in Nazi concentration camps be held to constitute "political or official activities," indicating that the internee has "over a period of years taken a public and prominent part in opposition to the Nazi system"? Or must the refugee also have a record of activity here, in a foreign country where he has been forbidden, only less stringently than in Germany, to play a part in politics? On the tribunal's answer to that question depends whether a mere handful or a large number of convinced anti-Nazis are to be released.

The promises made in Sir John Anderson's speech regarding "B" category internees are not wholly fulfilled. Many "B" category men and women who otherwise come within one or the other of the release categories must first have their cases reviewed (without legal representation or the right to know what, if any, are the suspicions against them) by a Regional Advisory Committee. Then they must obtain the offer of a job and the request for release from the prospective employer, securing the approval of the Divisional Controller of the Ministry of Labour, Forestry Commission or other appropriate Government Department—all leading in due course to consideration by the Home Office. If by that time the prospective employer has not lost patience and the war is still on, the internee may hope for release.

One damaging admission elicited by Major Cazalet was that parents of aliens who have volunteered for the A.M.P.C. are not to be released, though those whose British-born or naturalised sons have been conscripted will be. The same spirit doubtless accounts for the failure to make any change in the condition governing release for emigration. At present release for would-be emigrants is comparatively easy to arrange, provided the exit permit arrives before the sailing date of the boat on which passage has been booked (it often does not), provided also that papers have not been lost (they often have) during the first hurried arrest, or during one of the frequent transfers from camp to camp. But no opportunities are given to settle up business affairs, much less to visit relatives.

Last week's debate made it clear that the Minister for Home Security still regards refugees *en masse* rather as potential enemies than as eager friends. Perhaps his most typical statement on this theme was his endorsement of Earl Winterton's claim that "after these people were interned there was much less leakage of information from this country to the Continent than before they were interned." To those who remember that the beginning of the internment policy coincided with the disappearance of half a dozen neutral channels for the trans-

mission of information, to say nothing of the departure of the Italian Ambassador and his staff, this fact, if it is a fact, is not surprising. Yet no attempt was made to connect it with any instance of a "C" category refugee having attempted to communicate with Germany. Refugees, we were told, helped parachutists in Norway and Holland. We know that Nazi business men long allowed to come over the frontier without visas did so, but we have heard of no refugee cases. Again it was alleged that refugees are susceptible to German bribery and threats. Perhaps they may be; but Dutch, Belgian, and French experience proves that nationals of any invaded country may be susceptible to the same inducements. Can Earl Winterton or Sir John Anderson produce any real evidence against refugees?

### Railway Rates

The railway rates tribunal has already disclosed three facts. The first is that the proposals of the Railway Executive Committee are bitterly opposed by all organised users of the railways—an opposition undoubtedly shared by the great mass of the general public. The second is that many more facts need to be advanced by the committee before it can justify its claim and that, as many of the facts demanded by those opposing the claim cannot, according to the general manager of operations of London Transport, be secured for some weeks, an adjournment is essential if the inquiry is to serve any useful function in enlightening the public. And the third, and most important, is that the Railway Executive Committee has, in fact, no need to justify its claim since the Charges (Railway Control) Consultative Committee, by whom the inquiry is being held, has no power to ask whether the increase in rates is equitable or not. It is merely there to decide what is the best method of so increasing rates as to give the railways the yield to which they are automatically entitled under the agreement made with them by the Chamberlain Government last February. That agreement was strongly attacked by several members of the present Government when it was made. Its full details have never been publicly disclosed, but it fixed the net revenue guaranteed to the railways at a figure based on the high profit figures of 1935, 1936 and 1937, although net revenues were actually falling very rapidly, and excluded any saving in overhead costs resulting from an increase in traffic. Obviously, the details of the present agreement should be published at once and there should be an opportunity for a full debate in Parliament to decide whether the wisest course is not to scrap the present agreement entirely and either make a new one or—better still—give the Government power to take over the railways completely.

### Farmers and Income Tax

How many people, we wonder, have any idea of the privileged position accorded to farmers for long years in the matter of income-tax assessment? For some reason or other agriculturists have never been required to make the usual returns of their incomes which other people have to make, but Somerset House assumes that the profits of the farm are equal to its rent, and the farmer is assessed accordingly, no matter how much greater his profits may have been. On the other hand, should he have the misfortune to make a profit in any year less than the amount of his yearly rent, or none at all, he can obtain a refund of whatever he may have paid in excess of his earnings, by producing his accounts as evidence. Thus, the farmer gets it both ways, and, while he never pays more in taxation than is strictly due from him, in thousands of cases there is no doubt that he pays less. Now, however, all this is to be put right. Mr. R. S. Hudson, the Minister of Agriculture, has announced that he intends to remove the farmer's option to be assessed on his rent "above a certain limit," because "it is to be expected that substantial additional profits will accrue" from his new scale of guaranteed prices. This expectation is well founded. The price of wheat, for example, has just been raised from 50*s.* a quarter to 65*s.* 3*d.* a quarter, an increase of 30 per cent., although the only important item of cost which has risen materially is labour, and the increase in wages represents, we understand, an addition of about 1*s.* 6*d.* a quarter to the cost of this year's crop. Indeed, it has been estimated that the Minister's revised scale of farm prices, announced by him on the wireless on June 29th last, represents a bonus of many millions to farmers on this year's production of crops and stock, over and above its additional cost, and the whole of this will escape taxation unless the present basis of assessment is altered to bring it into line with that of other taxpayers. Writing last week on the subject of land reclamation, the Agricultural Correspondent of the *Times* expressed the opinion that costs incurred in clearing land of gorse and thorns for corn growing could be recovered up to as much as £4 an acre out of the returns of the first year. Clearly, land that requires no reclamation—ordinary farming land—is going to make profits, in the opinion of this authority, of £4 an acre, and this on land which in very few cases will average more than 30*s.* an acre for rent. Thus there will be untaxed profits of some £2 10*s.* an acre on all the old corn-growing lands of Britain.

Other taxpayers may well ask why it is necessary to guarantee farmers profits such as these, and the answer is, of course, that the new prices are given to keep the marginal producer in being, an end which cannot be achieved without giving the efficient farmer and the man on good land an excessive profit. The truth is, however, that in the absence of any income-tax returns from farmers there is no volume of evidence to guide the State as to the prices which must be guaranteed if farmers are to be able to carry on; and for this reason, if for no other, it is essential to have a general return of the profits of farming. At the same time, the demand for accounts would have a great educational value for farmers themselves. Even in these days of agricultural colleges, farm institutes and county agricultural advisory staffs, the farmer who keeps accounts is an exception, and the necessity for undertaking this work should go a long way to inculcate more businesslike habits in him.

## LIFE IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

THE greatest difficulty that confronts those who work for the war of liberation in Europe is the lack of information about occupied Europe. One of the most remarkable results of the French collapse has been the breaking of nearly all the lines of communication between Great Britain and the Continent. Over the conditions of life in the vast territories occupied by Hitler's armies lies the veil of Nazi censorship, lifted only by the occasional account of travellers arriving from unoccupied France and Portugal, and by secret reports smuggled out by the illegal opposition. Czechs and Poles have had more experience of this underground work than the Western democracies; and it is for this reason that we are now considerably better informed about conditions in Eastern Europe than about those in countries much nearer home.

From this meagre data, combined with a study of the German press and wireless, we can, however, piece together a picture of life in the new European Order which the Nazis are beginning to create. All the evidence points to a fairly consistent German policy—or rather to two policies. One, for areas like Poland, the Czech Protectorate and Alsace-Lorraine, which Hitler means to retain permanently inside the frontiers of the German state; another for those countries in which he hopes to create "autonomous" governments and to maintain a façade of national sovereignty.

Poland is the best example of the first of these policies, partly because she has been under German occupation for nearly a year, partly because German contempt for the Poles and ambitions for Eastern colonisation have removed any inhibitions the Nazis may have felt in dealing with this country. Last week, without a great deal of publicity, the *Gouvernement General* of Poland was formally included within the German State. This week, Herr Greiser, who once cocked a snook at Mr. Eden in Geneva, complacently announced that Hessian and Westphalian farmers, transported to Poland to enjoy the fruits of conquest, were now living as neighbours. Poland, in brief, has become what the German parts of it were before 1914, an agricultural and mining colony, and the Poles are being systematically driven down to the position of hewers of wood and drawers of water

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be more seemly, to say the least, if the connection were broken, par-

with the disappearance of half a dozen neutral channels for the trans-



for the chosen Aryan people. To the 300,000 Polish prisoners of war, now working on the fields inside Germany, have been added 300,000 labourers who " volunteered " for service in Germany at the Labour Exchanges which were the first organs of government set up after the conquest. The Nazis have made it a rule that Polish wages should be lower and taxes higher than those of Germans in the territory. A Polish worker, for instance, with a family of four and earning 30 marks pays a wage tax seven times greater than that of a German. If he earns 45 marks a week he pays 26 times more than a German.

The Nazi policy for Poland was outlined by Marshal Göring in a confidential circular issued in December of last year and smuggled out of Poland. The first paragraph runs :

> In view of the present military requirements of the Reich, a long term economic policy cannot be envisaged. It will be necessary to direct the economy of the *Gouvernement General* in such a way that the maximum economic resources can be got out of it for strengthening the Reich's military power.

These instructions have been observed and one result has been that prices have soared. The official price of potatoes in Warsaw is 60 per cent. higher than before the Nazi invasion, of butter 86 per cent. Most articles are unobtainable for long periods by legal trading. In Lublin, a town with 130,000 inhabitants, salt could only be obtained for weeks on end on a black market and at fantastic prices. Throughout the whole area the Polish social insurance was abolished and since last March has been replaced by allowances to which, it is stated in the German decree, " there is no legal claim." Meanwhile, the Germanisation of the land continues steadily. All holdings above 250 acres, representing an area of roughly 3,000,000 acres, are now under German control. Poles, like Jews, are " second-class citizens," slaves in their own country.

The same policy is being applied, though not with the same ruthlessness—Czech resistance is too formidable for that—in the Protectorate. Unemployment has been abolished, partly by transporting 300,000 Czechs for forced labour in Germany, partly by taking over the Labour Exchanges and organising them upon the Nazi system of " planned guidance." The Labour Exchanges now transfer to agriculture all those in receipt of unemployment benefit as well as able-bodied youths on short time as a consequence of the collapse of the consumption goods industries since the war broke out. The Czechs, too, are to become a colonial people, serving their German masters.

An entirely different policy has been adopted in Norway, Denmark, Holland and Belgium. Here, as far as possible, government and social institutions have been preserved intact, and the Reich Commissioners are trying to work through them. A typical instance is the " decree of the Führer concerning the exercise of government in Norway." The vital clauses of this decree are as follows :

> § 2. For the execution of his orders and the exercise of the administrative duties of the Norwegian Administrative Council, the Reich commissioner can make use of the Norwegian authorities.
>
> § 3. The previously followed law remains in force as far as it is compatible with the occupation. The Reich commissioner can legislate by decree

It is noteworthy, however, that in Holland German law courts have been established in the Hague to deal with all crimes committed by citizens of the Third Reich, and also with crimes committed (no matter what the nationality of the criminal) " against the German Reich, the German people, the Nazi Party and its organisations, or against any German citizen or any person in the service of the German Reich or the Party, if the crime was committed in connection with or during the execution of such a service."

So far the Nazis have had a considerable success in their attempt to work through the Governments of the occupied countries, or where these have fled, through the administrative machine. This success has been rendered possible by the excellent discipline of the German troops, and has been most marked in Denmark. In none of these countries, for instance, have the Trade Unions been dissolved. Instead, they are being " persuaded " to fall into line. The Danish T.U.C., for instance, is said to have disowned the class struggle. In Holland, however, the leaders of the free Trade Unions have been sacked and a Dutch Nazi installed as a commissar ; while in Norway the Trade Unions are subjected to strict control, no official being permitted to spend more than 500 krones without the permission of the German authorities.

The main concern of the Nazis has been to repair the damages caused by the war and to liquidate unemployment. For this second purpose a labour service on the German model has been instituted in all occupied countries, and batches of workers are being induced to volunteer for service in Germany. News about the first batch of Flemish workers was given last July in a speech by the Commissar for Antwerp, who said at their departure, " the workers will see with their own eyes how much they have been misled by enemy propaganda about conditions in Germany. They will feel happy in a kindred environment." The experience of the Danish unemployed, who accepted work in Germany, has, however, been different. They have now discovered that they are not permitted to return home unless they can show a certificate of discharge, made out by a German employer. If they reach the frontier they are chased back into Germany by the Danish police. The Nazi campaign against unemployment seems to have had considerable success everywhere except in Belgium. Here we learn from the *Frankfurter Zeitung* that, at the beginning of July, there were 387,931 unemployed on the official lists, and that at present the number is nearly half a million. After the return of the refugees and the demobilisation of the army, the *Frankfurter Zeitung* adds, the number is likely to be a million.

Apart from the conquest of unemployment, Nazi policy has been chiefly concerned to ensure that the German workers receive some concrete benefits from the conquest won by their efforts. One simple device, which has been adopted in all the occupied territories, has been the manipulation of the exchange in favour of German citizens. In Denmark, Norway, Belgium, France, Luxembourg and Holland, Reich credit banks have been established and are issuing both notes and currency, backed by German Treasury Bonds and tied to the legal currency at a fixed rate of exchange very favourable to Germany. In May the rate of exchange of the mark was fixed at 10 Belgian francs and .67 Dutch guilders. Now it has suddenly jumped up to 12½ Belgian francs and .75 Dutch guilders. Thus the Dutch are suddenly compelled to supply 12 per cent. more goods to German purchasers for every mark they pay, and the Belgians 25 per cent. more. As the industrialists are also paid in this *Ersatz* currency, a stimulus is provided for a further reduction of wages. In Norway the system has been developed a stage further. A special mark currency has now become the cover for the Norwegian currency and the mark notes are disappearing from circulation, so that the depreciation of the local currency is no longer so obvious.

The second benefit which the German people are deriving from their conquests is increased rations. The occupied countries are being systematically plundered, wherever this is possible. The slaughter of poultry in Denmark, for instance, has gone up from 383,000 kilos in May, 1939, to 611,000 kilos in May, 1940 ; and the Ministry of Agriculture reports that the pig population is to be reduced by half. It is already forbidden to use bread grain as feeding stuff. The Nazi attitude to Holland was summed up recently in the *Deutsche Volkswirt* : " The standard of living of the Dutch people must be reduced if the conquered country is to be able to supply Germany constantly with food stuffs. If the extraordinary high standard of living were reduced to an average standard, certain surpluses could be obtained, even of food stuffs of which there is a shortage now on the home market." A plan has been completed for the use of all Dutch agricultural produce. It is stated that this guarantees food supplies for Holland until 1941, but the *Frankfurter Zeitung* admits that the plan will necessitate rationing and the raising of prices.

Though the Nazis are determined that the German people should enjoy some of the fruits of conquest, they are almost equally anxious to placate the populations of the occupied territories in the West. There is no evidence here of any systematic " colonisation " such as they have carried through in Poland and Czechoslovakia. Nor, indeed, is there any long term plan either for their economic or political future—apart from one or two vague references in recent speeches to the over-industrialisation of France. Indeed, while the main outline of Hitler's New European Order is already clearly defined in his attitude to the conquered East, elsewhere he is chiefly concerned to strengthen his military position and to divert the enmity of the peoples against Britain.

In this policy he can reckon upon the support of influential members of the wealthier classes, particularly in Holland, Belgium and France, who before war broke out were already talking about the reorientation of economic policy away from Britain and towards Germany ; and he will hope to make useful propaganda out of the blockade and the unrepresentative character of the exiled governments. But already there are welcome signs of resistance, particularly in Norway and Holland. When so few tributes are paid to the B.B.C., it is pleasant to notice that the German wireless ascribes the Norwegian farmers' desire to turn their cash into goods to " the bestial propaganda from London " ; while in Holland the military governor, General Christiansen, was forced to issue a special decree threatening that

demobilised Dutch soldiers who do not behave correctly will be imprisoned. He also threatened to punish Dutchmen who " by their very ideology hurt the feelings of German soldiers," and forbade the Labour Sports Association to organise football matches which might turn into mass meetings. These signs of resistance are merely symptoms. Whether they develop into something more mainly depends upon the policy of the British Government.

## SIR OLIVER LODGE AND THE EVIDENCE FOR SURVIVAL

[FROM A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT]

THE observer cannot fail to be struck by the anomalous position of the heterogeneous collection of enquiries, speculations, experiments, facts and faiths assembled under the umbrella of " Psychical Research." The questions with which psychical research deals are of the profoundest moment. Is man's mind independent of his body in the sense that it can communicate with other minds without the assistance of bodily movements? Can we directly cognize the past and know the future? Do the utterances of mediums in trances provide evidence for the existence of the surviving personality of one who would normally be described as dead? To these questions, it is obvious, one would desperately like to know the answer. Yet the phenomena which could presumably help to provide it are studied by ill-qualified amateurs in the back parlours of private houses, while the whole field of psychical research is still for the most part a dubious territory in whose dimly-lit purlieus the quack happily and lucratively hunts the dupe.

It is in the light of this contrast between the questions so momentous and the methods of answering them, so amateurish and haphazard, that the later career of Sir Oliver Lodge may be most significantly viewed. Lodge was a scientist of the highest eminence, a holder of the Faraday medal, a recipient of honorary degrees from many universities, a President of the British Association, a recognised pioneer in the exploration of the relations between " matter " and the " ether." Now official science has always adopted an attitude of extreme circumspection to the phenomena studied by psychical research. No doubt there are good reasons for this attitude. There is the triviality of the phenomena themselves—the rattling tambourines, the flying waste-paper baskets, the jumping tables, above all the twaddling ethico-religious uplift of the so-called spirit messages; there is the pervading atmosphere of trickery and quackery from which the whole subject is only now beginning to emerge. Nevertheless, among so much chaff careful research has revealed the existence of a few grains of wheat. Something, it is obvious, goes on in the seance room whose causation we do not understand. The something, whatever it is, impinges upon the territory of a number of sciences, upon psychology, upon physiology, and upon physics. If even the tiniest proportion of the happenings is genuine, the fact suggests the presence of a mystery, or rather, a series of mysteries which constitutes a standing challenge to science. All honour, then to Sir Oliver Lodge who, indifferent to the superciliously lifted eyebrows of fellow scientists, devoted so much of the later years of his life to their investigation.

Inevitably Lodge approached the subject from the standpoint of the physicist. Physics requires us to suppose that the observed movements of matter are, or may be, due to forces that are not observed. In other words, the behaviour of matter is an index to something other than itself. The nature of this " something" is a matter of inference. In an address to the Society for Psychical Research bearing the title " On the Asserted Difficulty of the Spiritualistic Hypothesis from a Scientific Point of View," Sir Oliver pointed out that we :

> infer the properties of an electric field from its effect on what we call charged bodies. We infer and investigate a magnetic field from the behaviour of iron and other substances. We try to arrive at what an electric current really is from its various influences on matter. And Einstein is leading us to infer a curious warp or modification of space from the effect it has on the perceptible sensuous portions of the universe.

So far we are in the region of orthodox physics. Let us now extend this conception of the behaviour of the visible as an index to the operations of an inferred invisible on the sphere of life. Sir Oliver goes on :

> All that we see in a wooded landscape is due to the energy which has arrived through empty space and represents a storage of that energy in visible and tangible form. . . . A plant or tree is an incarnation of solar energy. . . . Just as a charged body was to Faraday the termination of an electric field, so a vegetable organism is the termination of a luminiferous field.

We are now in a position to generalise. It is through matter that we become aware of the universe but

> we need not, therefore, allow ourselves to fall into the blunder of considering that matter is its most essential feature or of confusing a phenomenon itself with its index and result. That would be rather like imagining that the deflection of the needle of a galvanometer was the essential thing about an electric current. It would be confusing the manifestation or sign of a thing with the thing itself.

The way is thus prepared for the impending conclusion. " So also I would hope that we might gradually infer and investigate the nature of an animating spirit from the behaviour of the organism on which we presume it acts." In other words, the behaviour of a human body is an index to the operations of a spirit which informs but does not depend upon it; which may, therefore, survive it. So, too, the behaviour of the body of a medium in a trance may be due to the activity of a spirit other than that which normally animates the medium's body.

It was, it may be supposed, considerations of this kind which originally led Sir Oliver Lodge to adopt the survival hypothesis. The occurrences following upon the death of his son Raymond in the last war—Sir Oliver claimed that he received communications from his son which proved his survival—only served to confirm a belief of which he had, as he thought, received convincing evidence twenty-five years before.

What grounds does the present condition of psychical research afford for this belief? The question brings one to the threshold of a territory across which the prudent will pass only with the greatest circumspection. There is, for example, no subject upon which there is expended more " wishful " thinking. The effect of our wishes can operate as strongly against belief in survival as in its favour. Not only does immortality appear to many as an appalling burden, but the indications that what survives is not the whole man but the man bereft of his highest faculties, and more particularly of his intelligence, render the burden doubly formidable. Reference has already been made to the platitudinousness into which even the most distinguished communicators appear to be betrayed directly they leave the flesh. Taken by and large, the intellectual content of spirit messages is such as to suggest the depressing conclusion that if ghosts have souls, they certainly have no brains.

In answer to this objection, if objection it be, believers stress the difficulties of communication. These are so great that communicators are driven to make use of an intermediary on their side just as we have to employ an intermediary, the medium, on ours. Lodge suggested that this intermediary might be a *persona* of the original personality, extruded for the specific purpose of communication, while the spirit himself was attending to other-worldly business; alternatively, it might be an automatic personality such as is produced in hypnosis or under anaesthetics, or even a special class of intermediate creature which acts as a liaison officer between this world and the next. The subject of these spirit " guides " or " controls " is shrouded in confusion, but whatever view we take of the nature of the intervening agent, we may presume that it is of a lower order of intelligence than the mind of the communicating spirit. Now the distorting effect of the intervener on our own side is known to be great. Messages bear upon them all too plainly the imprint of the personality of the medium, his social status, economic position, culture, tastes, partialities, being clearly reflected. Thus spirits in the Summer-land described in Sir Oliver's book *Raymond* are depicted as drinking whiskeys and sodas and playing bridge. There was even a time, when the craze for midget golf was at its height, when ghosts relieved the burden of immortality by the propulsion of midget golf balls. So strong are these indications, that many have been inclined to ascribe the whole content of the messages to emanations from the unconscious self of the medium. It is not necessary to go all the way with this hypothesis to recognise the importance of the intervening " medium element " in the message. Now if there are not one but two interveners, the risk of distortion is obviously very much greater.

Why not, it may be asked, go all the way with the unconscious self hypothesis? The answer is because of the 10 per cent., or it may be even 1 per cent., of grain among the chaff that cannot be so explained. Of great importance in this connection is the evidence from Cross-Correspondence. Fragments of messages are given to different mediums; unintelligible in themselves, they make sense, and sometimes very significant sense, when combined with other fragments received by mediums living it may be on the other side of the world. A full discussion of the subject will be found in H. F. Saltmarsh's recently published work *Cross Correspondence*. It is extremely difficult to read this book without coming to the conclusion that some messages at least are impossible of explanation on the unconscious self theory,

always assuming that the evidence has been clearly presented.

But has it? The investigator of psychical research requires among other qualities a very nice discrimination in the matter of evidence, a discrimination which investigators have not always possessed. Here it is difficult to feel that Sir Oliver was wholly free from censure. As one reads his works, one continually comes across passages such as the following which occurs in a lecture entitled "Conviction of Survival" delivered in honour of the late F. W. H. Myers.

> An ectoplasmic hand which he had strongly held . . . had dematerialised in his grasp; this had struck him more than the more normal kind of movements which I had witnessed, such as might be accomplished by a liberated or by extra and temporary limbs.

"An ectoplasmic hand had dematerialised in his grasp"! Possibly, possibly not. One would feel less dubious, if Lodge had not explicitly adopted a lower standard for evidence in the field of psychical research than that which he regarded as necessary in the field of science proper. He defended this difference of standard on pragmatical grounds. When discoveries of such vast importance and, as he believed, of such immeasurable benefit to mankind were involved, a warmly sympathetic rather than a coldly critical attitude was, he felt, demanded. In an atmosphere of cold criticism not only did the evidence tend to wilt; the phenomena tended not to occur; and it was, for him, highly important that they should occur. This seems perilously near to an admission that the strength of our desire for the truth of a certain hypothesis constitutes in itself evidence for its truth. Though Lodge would certainly have repudiated this statement of his view, it is difficult not to constrast the rigorous respect for evidence which he evinced as a physicist and the somewhat indiscriminate receptiveness which he showed as a psychical researcher. One would have thought that the very importance of the questions involved was a reason for an added degree of scrupulousness in one's attitude to the evidence. It must surely be wrong to encourage people to believe that what they desire to think true is true, simply because they desire to think it. The wrong is, one would have supposed, greater in wartime when the craving of bereaved persons to think that those for whom they care may still be living is stronger than in more normal times. The existence of many who are prepared to exploit this craving for private gain should make scientists doubly careful to ensure that nothing is admitted as evidence which cannot pass the strictest tests. The scientist has been trained to respect evidence; his duty, therefore, is not to go with the stream but to oppose to it the criticism which his special training permits him to exercise.

# A LONDON DIARY

THERE is a good deal of gossip about a Cabinet reshuffle. One version runs that there is to be a War-Triumvirate, Churchill, Beaverbrook and Bevin. This seems to me unlikely and is, I suspect, based on nothing more than the fact that these three are the outstanding personalities in the Cabinet. Another rumour puts Herbert Morrison at the Ministry of Information, while Lord Beaverbrook would run a Ministry of Munitions, a merger of the present Ministries of supply and aircraft production. That would, I think, be a real improvement. Herbert Morrison would do great things with home publicity and make much better sense of "Minnie" than his predecessors. Though he has done well at Supply, he has not worked miracles. One explanation of this was given me last week by a business executive. Morrison, he said, is "too sensible" for the job. You want a man who is slightly cracked to deal with the armaments industry. A sane man is just defeated by it. That, my friend suggested, is why Beaverbrook, who is inspired rather than sensible, has pulled it off. And he added that each Ministry should be subjected to an eight-week dose of Beaverbrook's methods and then left to settle down again. I rather fear that talk about change at the Foreign Office may be no more than wishful thinking, and I doubt if Eden, whose name is mentioned as an alternative, would be much improvement. Both the Foreign Office and the War Office need shaking up. The difficulty of course is to find men who can be brutal to Brass Hats in the one and to complacent gentleman in the other. I have a feeling that Ernest Bevin might make a good Foreign Secretary. He can make statesmanlike speeches in public, he can be highly unconventional in negotiation, and he knows a knave when he sees one. If you say he does not know about "diplomacy," I reply that he shares the deficiency with Ribbentrop, Molotov, and Count Ciano who do not seem to have done so badly against the professionals! What he *does* know about are the working people in most countries and the ways of dealing with fairly unscrupulous opponents.

Frank Owen, the Editor of the *Evening Standard*, was once a Radical M.P., and he obviously revels in the chance of speaking as well as writing on behalf of freedom. Among the many stars—they included H. W. Nevinson, the Grand Old Man of English liberty—who adorned the platform at the conference called by the National Council for Civil Liberties last week-end, Frank Owen was far and away the favourite. He moved the huge conference (there were 1,553 delegates representing 1,800,000 people) to a tumultuous applause, which actually lasted several minutes. The most effective thing in his speech was the contrast between two Austrians now in this country. The first a Doctor of Law and a Social Democrat was a mayor in a borough of Vienna, who put up fine workers' buildings and did much to raise the standard of working-class living and education in Vienna. His buildings were battered by the artillery of Dr. Dollfuss and he was put into a concentration camp. After Hitler's arrival he went to Dachau for 14½ months. The other Austrian is a duke who owned thirteen castles and was a Fascist. He marched with Hitler in 1923 and later worked with Mussolini. He wrote to the Duce "I have always deliberately fostered Fascism and fought Democracy." "Where is he now?" asked Frank Owen. "In a concentration camp? No. In the Isle of Man? No. He was last seen at Claridge's and is now an officer in the R.A.F., fighting the battle of freedom; but the Austrian Doctor is now in the Isle of Man."

* * *

This conference on Liberty met with a feeling of considerable confidence Parliament has shown itself very much alive; the Silent Column is silent; the threat of compulsory censorship has been checked, and the Government has tried to reassure us about its treatment of refugees and the restoration of civil liberty after the war. Delegates from all over the country gave instances of the way in which the Emergency Powers had been abused, and recalled the example of France to show that on the pretext of maintaining public morale in wartime, special powers may be used to destroy it and pave the way for Fascism. Anyone who wishes to understand precisely what powers are now in the Government's hands, and who wants, in short, an expert picture of the battle for liberty on the home front, will find a mass of authoritative information in *British Liberty in Danger* (Lawrence and Wishart, 5s.) by Ronald Kidd, who as Secretary of the Council for Civil Liberties, has, as H. W. Nevinson says in his Foreword, been the persistent and successful watchdog of British freedom during the last eight years.

* * *

It is difficult to be an honest journalist anywhere to-day. In Fascist countries the species has been exterminated; in "occupied areas" a few heroes still prefer the risks of death to the prostitution of their profession. Recently one of these heroes paid the penalty of his courage in Shanghai. His name was Samuel H. Chang. He was a Chinese business man as well as a journalist; he had been educated in the United States and worked for the *Shanghai Evening Post*. Norminally safe in the Concession area he continued his support for the Chinese Government in spite of threats. He knew that he was on Wang Ching-wei's black-list and one of his last letters to a friend in England describes a visit to Chungking and his modest delight at finding that his honesty and bravery in continuing the struggle behind the Japanese lines was appreciated in the firing line. He was shot while taking tea in a shop on Bubbling Well by an assassin who got away after also shooting a bystander who grappled with him. Mr. Hallett Abend, the American correspondent to the *New York Times*, in sending an account of this murder, also described how armed Japanese entered his apartment in Shanghai after midnight, trussed his arms behind his back, stole the MSS. of a historical book which they thought to be anti-Japanese, ransacked his rooms and generally let him know (for the fourth time) that Japan does not like independent journalists, even Americans. As I said, honest journalism is now one of the dangerous professions.

* * *

I notice a strange passage in *Truth* for August 2nd. After referring to a remark made about the Swinton Committee by Mr. G. R. Strauss, M.P., *Truth* goes on to list a number of titled members of the ruling class who were killed in the Battle for France. *Truth* says that it

> did not notice any names like Gollancz, Laski, and Strauss, from which I draw the conclusion—for Mr. Strauss is not the only one who can do that—that what happened in the last war is being repeated in this. The ancient families of Britain—the hated ruling class of the Left Wing diatribes—are sacrificing their bravest and best to keep the Strausses safe in their homes, which in the last war they did not don uniform to defend.

Well, in the interests of truth (not of *Truth*) I think this should be corrected. Mr. Gollancz wore uniform throughout the last war,

Mr. Neville Laski also served as an officer, Mr. H. J. Laski was medically examined and rejected for all forms of service, Mr. G. R. Strauss was too young to serve and his brother was an R.A.F. pilot who was killed in action.

Why not keep the party clean? There is no sense and much mischief in throwing about dirt of this kind. Patriotism is not the highest virtue, but it is a virtue that is pretty equally shared among the various races that make up Britain. And this kind of thing seems particularly undesirable in a journal which has a member of the Swinton Committee, Mr. W. C. Crocker, on its Board.

* * *

Really, it seemed preposterous to leave all those bushels of greengages—a crop such as one gets once in twelve years—to rot on the trees. The cottagers have home-made labels at the gates inviting soldiers to come and help themselves and offering greengages to the world in general at a penny a pound. Even so, they told me, the vast majority of them would have to be left on the trees to rot. I decided to repeat my experiment of a few weeks ago. The local greengrocer in London offered me twopence a pound for as many greengages as I could bring. The villagers got busy and picked perhaps three hundred pounds of greengages which they piled into the back of my small car. Alas for the folly of the amateur! Alas for the ignorance of the gardener who has never before been in touch with the market! The greengages in perfect condition for eating had been put into large sacks; they were wet and many of them were pulped by their own weight by the time they reached London. "It's a crime," said the greengrocer. Couldn't he sort them out? Only a few of them were broken. No, he declared, it was impossible. They would look wet and no one would buy them. They ought to have been packed in small baskets or boxes. "Take them and leave them at a hospital. That's all they are good for." A cautionary tale to the would-be fruit grower. Packing is as important as transport. So ridiculously obvious and yet so easy to ignore when you have no supply of small boxes or hampers at your disposal.

* * *

A friend who lived in southern England, describes the behaviour of the villagers when an air raid failed to interrupt the local garden fête in aid of the Red Cross. He writes: "We have two or three air raids most days and we had seven German bombers swoop a few feet over our roofs machine-gunning only six days before our fête—so we know something about the *Blitzkrieg*. But we held our fête on Saturday with stalls, side-shows, dancing on the lawn, and the acting of scenes from *Twelfth Night* under the old mulberry tree, which is a stone's-throw from the path still called Princess Gap because Princess Elizabeth used to walk there when she stayed in our village in the days before she became Shakespeare's Queen Elizabeth. So it was all very much in the English order, and we felt quite secure with one foot in the sixteenth and the other in the twentieth century as we listened to the Rector's wife and Tom and Dick and Joyce and Annie transformed under the mulberry tree into Olivia, Malvolio, Sir Toby, Maria. The sun shone from a clear sky and there were some 250 of us sitting on the lawn. There were mothers with babies and there were about 20 or 30 children playing about and sometimes getting mixed up with the actors. And then just when the Clown was singing "Come away, come away, death," the sirens began to wail. Not a soul moved; the play went on. I thought to myself that at least a mother or two would take her children off to shelter. But not a bit of it; they sat there and watched the children sprawling on the lawn as if Göring and his *Luftwaffe* were as unreal and innocuous as Malvolio."

* * *

An obstinate man, I am very reluctant to admit that Britain was not invaded early on Sunday morning. It was like this: About 11.0 on Saturday night my wireless would not work and the telephone operator explained that calls were restricted. Obviously something pretty big was going on. Outside the L.D.V. man on guard over the ten houses and a kennel which make up this village also had the impression that the night was going to be exciting. We discussed the moon; and he recalled the far bigger moons he had known when he put up telegraph posts in tropical Africa, the only white man in his area with several hundred natives under him. Back to the house: still no wireless; bed. At 5.0 precisely I was awakened by a new noise. Unmistakably church bells, ringing clear and musical. No doubt at all: the invasion had come. I woke up Thea who listened and was convinced. But the bells died down, and instead there was singing. This seemed incredible. Our vicar is an enterprising man, but he could not have collected a choir to meet the Germans as quickly as that. I went downstairs to investigate. I had left the wireless switched on and some station, German presumably, began the day with church bell music. The invasion was off. Thea, who holds that I like believing the worst, laughed at me. "Cheated again," she said and went to sleep.

* * *

In a south-western district a German plane came over and dropped high explosive and incendiary bombs. Some of the latter fell in the drawing room, some in the garden and others round about. A highly respected person (call him Mr. Legg, for short) having dealt with those in the house and garden, was bending over one that had fallen in the road when it suddenly flared up. Mr. Legg straightened up and to his alarm found a gun pointed by two or three home guards in his back.

"Who are you? What are you doing?" they asked. "Where's your identity card?"

"Don't usually carry my identity card in my pyjamas," said Mr. Legg, "and as for what I'm doing, I'm clearing up the mess."

"Oh, no, you weren't," said the home guards, "we saw you, you were a'lighting of incendiary bombs!"

CRITIC

## THIS ENGLAND

**Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Patrick Kirwan.**

**All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.**

It is quite evident that we are all called upon to make heavy sacrifices, but they will be made cheerfully, and willingly, to achieve victory, and I am tempted to close these remarks with a quotation from a speech made by the American Senator, Key Pittman, which to my mind aptly expresses the spirit and determination of all members of the British Empire, viz.: "It is evident that nobody dies but once and life's period is limited; so it is far better to die a few days earlier for Christianity, justice, and liberty than to live a little longer in cowardice and degeneracy."

I now have pleasure in proposing: "That the report and accounts be adopted, and that a dividend at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum, less income tax, be paid to holders of the Ordinary stock on August 27th."—Report of a Company meeting in the *Times*.

LET'S BAN ALL WAR TALK

(Notice in a hotel lounge in a "safe" area—August, 1940.)

A cut in an Empire broadcast by the Rev. Henry Carter, the Free Church leader, is explained by Mr. Duff Cooper, Minister of Information, in a written reply. The deleted sentences referred to working populations everywhere being very poor after the war. Mr. Duff Cooper states that the B.B.C. asked Mr. Carter to withdraw the sentences, as they gave an unbalanced view of the position in this country.—*Evening Standard*.

Because their second daughter was born as an all-clear siren was sounding, Mr. and Mrs. R. English, of Bishopsford Road, St. Helier, propose to name her Sireen.—*Evening Standard*.

Leicester Co-operative Society has decided to dismiss any conscientious objector's wife in its employ, and not to employ such women in future.—*Times*.

It would not be altogether fair to put the whole blame on those who had hitherto been responsible for the conduct of affairs . . . they suffered from shortcomings for which they were not responsible; and an equal handicap was the ineradicable mistrust with which some of them were viewed by former political opponents in this country and by some sections of public opinion in other countries.—*Times*.

Gentleman (beginner) anxious to join small private Shoot in Scotland where instruction can be given.—Advertisement in the *Times*.

## WHOSE LEBENSRAUM?

"REPORTS have recently been spread in Slovakia that the Russians may come and liberate the Slovak people. I must deny these senseless rumours and announce that nothing of the sort will ever happen. Slovakia is once and for all under Germany's influence and Communism has no place here." The speaker, the Slovak Prime Minister, Tuka, had just returned from his visit to the Führer at Obersalzberg. What has Hitler to fear from Russia in Slovakia?

Hitler cannot, unless he is really desperate, hand Slovakia over to Stalin. He needs Slovakia for himself. Slovakia is his eastern gateway, essential to his control of south-eastern, and indeed of eastern, Europe. His whole eastern defence system is based upon it and the control of

the Danube bridgehead at Bratislava, enables German troops to reach the Jugoslav or Rumanian frontiers within a few hours. Again, Slovakia is necessary to Germany's economic system. She is an easy source of cheap labour and raw materials—in a normal year she produces 4½ million cubic metres of timber, and since the war this output has been doubled; she can be used to "negotiate" new trade treaties with reluctant small neutrals; or her independence can be held out as a tempting ideal in separatist propaganda among the minorities of south-eastern Europe, and especially among the Catholic Croats.

Hitler has therefore the strongest reasons for holding Slovakia within his *Lebensraum* and for stamping out any signs of a movement towards Russia. It was quite clear by the middle of June that there had been too many such signs and it was generally believed in Bratislava that Hitler would soon call the Slovak Government to order. As far back as November, 1939, Tuka, in his first official statement, had emphasised the Slav feelings of the Slovaks and had spoken warmly of the Russians as a brother Slav nation, sacrificing itself in a gigantic experiment for the good of humanity. At the end of April a Slovak delegation which left to attend the Moscow University celebrations was accompanied to the station by Tuka and many Bratislava notables, and in the words of the Slovak radio, "in the solemnly decorated hall of the Bratislava station Dr. Tuka stressed the significance of the journey and . . . said he was convinced that the result would be a guarantee of closer Slovak-Russian relations in the field of culture and science." The chief delegate when he returned delivered a speech expressing hope that his visit had strengthened not only the cultural ties between Bratislava and Moscow, but general relations between Russia and Slovakia. At about the same time the Minister for Foreign Affairs is believed to have begun conversations with the Soviet Minister, in which he tried to persuade Moscow to use its influence to counterbalance German pressure.

Hitler obviously could not allow this. The Bratislava Government, timid and servile as it was, had begun to make too many efforts towards independence, and President Tiso had in May even gone so far as to dismiss Sano Mach, Germany's chief Slovak helot, from his post as Commander-in-Chief of the Hlinka Guard. Tiso, Tuka and Sano Mach, who had remained Minister for Propaganda, were therefore summoned to a meeting with Hitler and Ribbentrop, to be held at Obersalzberg on July 27th. The Slovaks looked forward to the meeting with great fears for the "integrity" of the Slovak state, and a flood of rumours preceded the journey—particularly the rumour that Hitler had decided to incorporate an autonomous Slovakia, including parts of Carpathian Ruthenia, within a larger Hungary.

The Slovak delegates were received graciously by Hitler. The Hungarian plan, they found, had been abandoned, but they were obliged to promise that Slovak revisionist propaganda against Hungary would be stopped. Later, when the territorial problems of south-eastern Europe had been definitely settled, Slovakia would be compensated for her losses. Slovakia was to remain "independent" and under German protection or, as the *Essener National Zeitung* wrote at the time, it might become "a future example for other states."

Secondly, Hitler put an end to any further Russian flirtations. He forced a change in the Slovak Government in which Sano Mach was not only reinstated as Commander-in-Chief of the Hlinka Guards, but made Minister of the Interior, with control of the police. Tuka was also ordered to make the speech quoted above, in which he went on to say that "The Slovak State will never be Communist, just as the Benes *régime* will never return to Slovakia. . . . Our future, hitherto obscure, becomes clearly defined after the Slovak politicians' visit to Salzburg. We have no room for any other influence, and least of all for Communism, which will be pushed into the background. It may do for Russia but not for Slovakia. . . . We are to-day completely linked with our greater protector, Germany: we are led by the great Adolf Hitler."

The consequences of these changes in the Government will soon be felt in Slovakia. Any opposition to German economic exploitation or to German terrorism will be crushed by the bullying and obsequious Mach. The Slovak Diet which, although "elected" by entirely totalitarian methods, has resisted Hitler on a number of occasions, will be sent on holiday. The German minority will be given still greater privileges and influence, and Slovakia will very soon find herself in exactly the same position as the "Protectorate." Hints dropped by Sano Mach after his return show that the concentration camp at Illava will soon have a great influx of "Benesists, Bolsheviks and Jews." The appointment of Manfred von Killinger (author of a book on how to torture prisoners) as German Minister to Bratislava shows what the Germans have in mind.

Economically, in spite of a good deal of discussion as to how Slovakia's economic life could be linked still more closely with Germany, only two concrete points seem to have been settled, but they are of considerable importance. Germany has been given complete control of the Bokumin—Kosice (Oderberg-Kaschan) railway, and "permission" to build an *Autobahn* from Vienna through Bratislava, the Tatra valleys and Eastern Slovakia to the new Slovak-Russian frontier near Michalovce. (This Slovak *Autobahn* and the land on both sides of it will, of course, be exempt from Slovak sovereignty and under German administration and jurisdiction, like the three *Autobahnen* across the Protectorate. Its costs, estimated at about £10,000,000, will be paid by the Slovak Government.) As for the railway, if "negotiations" with the Hungarians give the Germans control of the railway from Kosice to Halmei, as there is every reason to believe that they will, Germany will have a direct line to the Rumanian oilfields. This is vastly important since the Russian occupation of the Bukovina has made the use of the northern route through Cernauti wholly dependent upon Russian goodwill. JOAN GRIFFIN

# ON BUYING A LEMON

ON Saturday I went into a fruiterer's shop in a country town to buy some fruit, including a few lemons. The woman in the shop, not wishing to ruin me, warned me: "They're fivepence to-day." I halved the amount of my order. But when I read in the newspaper next day that lemons were being sold for a shilling in London, fivepenny lemons began to seem cheap. I decided that lemons at a shilling each were one of the luxuries that wise men must be content to do without till the good times come again.

Yet I am an enthusiastic believer in the lemon. I regard it as a fruit with almost miraculous properties. I once read a book about it which convinced me that there was scarcely a disease or an ailment that could not be cured by it. If you had a sore throat, you gargled with lemon juice and all was well. If you suffered from catarrh, you strained some lemon juice, diluted it and sniffed it up. If you got a cut, you put lemon juice on it. A nurse was quoted as having told how she cured an ulcerated stomach by drinking the juice of twelve lemons every day. A friend of the author's declared that one old man who was suffering from cancer and had been given up by the doctors, was cured after a few months' treatment with lemon juice. Another man who drank a good deal assured me that it was a preventive of cirrhosis of the liver. "My rule is," he said, "always to take the juice of two lemons before going to bed. Shoot it off the liver." Yet another man I knew rubbed it into his scalp as a cure for baldness.

With all this evidence of the virtues of the lemon, I naturally became a convert to its use. I drank the unsweetened juice of a lemon every morning before breakfast, and, as a result, I certainly felt as well as usual. It is a medicine of the kind I like, which you can swallow only with an effort and which, therefore, you feel must be doing you good. You tell yourself that, like the juices of a raw onion, it is penetrating to every cell and membrane of your body. It has none of the ladylike softness of barley-water or of the insinuating charm of tomato juice. It is as rough as a sea-wind, and as bracing.

Why with all my faith in lemon juice I ever gave it up, I cannot make out. Perhaps it is that we tire most easily of things that we believe are good for us and cling most desperately to things that we believe are bad for us. Certainly it is a much simpler matter to stop taking a medicine than to stop smoking. Good things, it seems, end by boring us. I have no doubt that the common dislike of green vegetables is partly due to the supposition that they purify the blood. If we were told that cabbage contained a dangerous poison, most of us would be dogged cabbage-eaters from infancy. It is impossible to get tired of things believed to be poisonous. No sane man ever became tired of tea or coffee. I liked pepper ever since the day in my childhood when I was told that it stunted the growth. Not long ago I read in a pamphlet that ordinary pepper is harmful, but that cayenne pepper is "curative." Always on the look-out for a new cure—"Of what?" it may be asked, and I do not know the answer—I revelled in cayenne pepper for a week or two; and then gradually my taste turned against it. Much as I enjoyed its colour, I could not conceal from myself the fact that it was "curative" and that I was taking it as a duty and not for pleasure. That, so far as I was concerned, was the end of cayenne pepper.

There are, of course, a number of valetudinarians who love with a lasting love even things they believe are doing them good. The rest of us merely flirt with the good things of life—yeast, barley water and

tanninless tea—and we drift irresponsibly from one love of the moment to another. The best type of valetudinarian, on the other hand, takes his cures seriously and lives for them. He can go on eating the same kind of patent hygienic loaf for years. He never forgets his saccharine pellets or his bismuth tablets. Give him a bottle and he will become his own faithful nurse, dosing himself punctually three times a day after meals. Once in an Italian hotel I met an American woman who had so many patent foods and medicines to take that she never had time to go out. She told me that she often forgot to write to her husband, but that she never forgot to take her yeast. We had long heart-to-heart talks on the Californian lemon. Having read somewhere that the Californian lemon was lacking in the vitamins for which the Sicilian lemon is famous—probably an erroneous statement—I asked her one day, "Are Californian lemons any good?" She looked at her sister and screamed: "Sister, do you hear what Mr. Y. says about Californian lemons?" and she repeated my innocent question. Whereupon she and her sister went off into shrieks of hysterical laughter, and I gathered that they looked on me as a wag on a level with Artemus Ward.

It would be wrong, however, to regard the lemon merely as a medicinal fruit, though some botanists seem to emphasise its medicinal qualities by describing it as a variety of *Citrus medica*. Yet what purely epicurean pleasures we have owed to it throughout our lives! The present generation may be inclined to doubt it, but lemonade in syphons was once a drink like nectar. The secret of making lemonade like this has, I fear, been lost, like the secret of the heather ale. The lemon was also associated with pleasure in the minds of small boys who believed that if you went up and sucked a lemon in the presence of a German band, the men who were playing brass instruments would find their lips writhing and would be unable to continue playing. It is a curious fact that, though every boy I knew believed this, none of them ever tried to prove the truth of it by experiment. Perhaps that was because we should have hated to stop the band from playing the *Lorelei*. The thought of catching a trombonist's eye and putting him out of action in mid-career by sucking a lemon at him was good. But the *Lorelei* was better.

Then the lemon became associated with the joys of football. One of the essential figures of a game of Rugby was always the man who came out at half-time with a trayful of lemons and passed them round to the thirty heroes, who sucked them gluttonously and afterwards hurled the remains towards the touch-line. Rugby without lemons would lose much of its flavour. Having reached the age of discretion and learnt to drink whiskey—this takes some doing with many people—we began to appreciate the lemon for other reasons. In those days whiskey and hot water was an even commoner drink than whiskey and soda in the public houses. You ordered "a small whiskey hot with a slice of lemon," and your drink was served in a small glass containing a glass muddler with which you pressed the juice out of the lemon and the sweetness out of the lump of sugar that accompanied it. Why this excellent drink vanished from common use I have often wondered. Possibly its disappearance was the result of the sugar shortage in the last war. I regret it only on sentimental grounds. It was, I am sure, a dangerous drink, and who knows but that I might have grown too fond of it for that reason?

Those who will miss the lemon most during its present scarcity, I fancy, are the oyster-eaters and the lovers of smoked salmon. It is true that some oyster-eaters prefer vinegar, but there are others to whom an oyster without lemon would be like Swan without Edgar. As for smoked salmon, without lemon it would be an unimaginable and disgusting thing. Ordinary people like myself can get along without lemons, but the epicure, lacking them, will be a lost soul. Epicures, however, should reflect on the fact that there were epicures in Greece and Rome who led full and pleasant lives and yet who never knew the bite of lemon juice. Life, they will then realise, may be worth living even without lemons. It is only to the modern epicure that the answer is always a lemon. (What, by the way, is the meaning of that meaningless phrase?)

Let us not blame the epicures, however. Now that lemons are almost unobtainable, I begin to feel a growing sensation of craving for them myself. It is tantalising to think how many lemons there must be in the world at the present moment—three thousand lemons frequently ripen on a single tree—and that between them and us stands Signor Mussolini or, as a fruiterer whom I know pronounces his name, Muzzle Oaney. Still, we may comfort ourselves with the reflection that lemons, like the nightingales of Heractitus, will survive the individual man and that the honest yellow face of the lemon will still be shining when Muzzle Oaney is no more. If that is any comfort to you, epicures, take it to your bosoms. Y. Y.

## NOTHING ALIEN IS HUMAN

Soon, very soon, the sun will rise again and shine . . . we shall call at the chosen moment to all whom Hitler enslaved and tortured to rise.—Dr. Hugh Dalton. Broadcast Aug. 11th.

WHEN Ministers prophetically call
To friendly aliens conquered and oppressed,
Their orotund asseverations fall
A trifle flat, it has to be confessed,
While they, proclaiming liberty for all,
The champions of liberty arrest;
And even to the friendliest alien ear
Their words sound relatively insincere.

The friendly alien fails to understand
Why, when enslaved, we name them our allies,
Their kindred in our own crusading land
We class as suspects, saboteurs and spies;
So when at our benevolent command
The sun of freedom once again shall rise
They may not credit the phenomenon
But ask whose side it will be shining on.

When we intern the friends of liberty
We cancel Ministerial eloquence,
When we deport the alien refugee
We shake the friendly alien's confidence,
Until between us and the enemy
They find in fact so little difference
That when we sound the hour of their release
They may be reconciled to Nazi peace.

Though with the tongue of angels and of men
Our cause to liberty we dedicate,
Till England to herself is true again
And those unjustly held we liberate,
So long as to the friendly alien
Fear and mistrust our policy dictate,
It seems, at least to aliens, a mistake
To say that Britain fights for freedom's sake.

SAGITTARIUS

## BANKING ON DEATH

HE was very shabby, he was elderly, nearer seventy than sixty, and he entered the pub with a melancholy and yet indignant expression. Bill and Harry and I made room for him at the counter expecting to hear from him the usual demand, "A pint."

He said, instead:

"A glass of Jameson. Water."

He made his request with an air of authority which didn't seem to fit in with his shabby overcoat, his greasy bowler hat and his broken boots, but we realised he had a right to be authoritative when to pay for his whiskey he pulled out from his pocket a bunch of pound notes. They looked as greasy as his hat but they must have been genuine for the barman was satisfied and gave him his change.

Almost in a gulp he swallowed his drink and said:

"Another."

It was brought.

We three continued our conversation but when, within ten minutes, he had ordered and drank two more whiskies we grew curious. Bill has a knack of getting into conversation with anyone and everyone. I think he started with the shabby old man on the weather and the Curragh races. The old fellow was not very responsive on either subject but the whiskey eventually made him communicative though he kept his indignant expression.

"It's good, sir," says Bill, "in these days to have a pocket-full of notes."

"Maybe."

A few more light, useless remarks from Bill.

"The same again. I'll thank you to change another pound."

We turned aside and talked among ourselves, sipping our humble beers. And then, suddenly, from him:

"Me an't died last week."

We were immediately sympathetic, we understood his gloom, looked for the tear in his eye but didn't see it. We murmured sympathy. I had lost a very dear aunt a few months previously and I was able to be specially feeling, but he didn't melt. Instead he said:

"I insured her for ten pounds. I collected the ten pounds to-day. I have them in me pocket."

He showed us eight dirty pound notes.

Harry said:

"Well, that's fine."

"When she was just over seventy I insured her for ten pounds at a shillin' a week. She was failing then. I thought I was gameball. She was a horrid old woman, a bad an't to me and a worse sister to me father."

"Well, she's gone to her rest now."

"She'll never rest. . . . Another Jameson. . . . She went to a Home for the Dying and they looked after her well."

"It's good to know that."

"And I ped me shillin' every week. They looked after her well!" A terrible bitterness came into his voice. "She had every comfort."

"I hope she didn't suffer in the end," said I, thinking of my poor aunt.

"Suffer? She passed out in her sleep. She didn't even have measles. Did you not see the case in the papers the other day of the wonderful oldest woman in Ireland who died at the age of a hundred and thirteen?"

"Yes," said Harry, with enthusiasm, "and her faculties perfect up to the last couple of months. Wonderful is the word."

"That was me an't. Since she was seventy-three I've been paying me bloody shillin' a week, thinking every year she'd kick the bucket, saying, 'Will I go on with it? Ah, chance it, Jack. The winter's too cold, she'll peg out, the summer's too hot, she can't last.' I'm not much good at arithmetic but I think I've spent eighty pounds on her—a hundred and thirteen years, can you beat it?—and now I've ten dirty pounds in my pocket and she's the Kathleen ni Houlihan of Ireland and I'm the mug. Another Jameson. And, will you join me, gentlemen?"

We did, in deep sympathy.

LENNOX ROBINSON

# RECOLLECTIONS OF TROTSKY

THE historian who has to account for the Russian Revolution may mention personality last of all among the causes that explain its success, but under this head he will have a fascinating tale to tell. First comes the nameless collective personality of the Bolshevik Party, hardened into a band of ironsides, capable of any audacity and any sacrifice by their years of struggle with the Czarist police. The weaklings and the chatterers had been eliminated, and those who survived were as unscrupulous over means as they were loyal to their ends. Then comes the singular figure of Lenin, whose greatness lay, I think, not merely in his unflinching will, but even more in his selflessness and objectivity. But during the decisive, formative years the leadership lay with two ideal partners, Lenin and Trotsky. They had quarrelled once or twice, as exiles will, in the dead and hopeless years before the war, and they quarrelled again over the Brest-Litovsk peace. But on the whole they admired and understood each other. Trotsky was the perfect foil to the greater man. He was the romantic who dramatised himself. He never threw away the mental looking-glass in which he saw himself in the centre of the contemporary picture, and in his later years this egoism had mastered and distorted him. Nature had been kind to him, for he was a handsome man with an athletic body: he had, moreover, a musical voice that helped to make his oratory as pleasing as it was formidable. At his best he wrote with a sense of literary form and a rapier-like wit that his chief lacked. Lenin led by the sheer weight of willpower, backed by an intellectual's cold logic. Trotsky relied on his magnetism, his charm and his appeal to the imagination. Together they touched every stop in their appeal and made the perfect combination of strategist and executant.

A curious chance brought me into touch for a moment with the two men during their years of exile. I will not profess that I realised their greatness, but the contrasts of this partnership were obvious enough. It happened ten years before the revolution. A ship loaded with human explosives had carried the delegates of the underground Russian Social-Democratic Party from Helsingfors to Copenhagen, thence to Stockholm, and finally to the Thames. Only in London would the police allow it to land and hold its conference. It had been sitting for a week, Bolsheviks and Mensheviks together, in a little tin chapel in Southgate, when a Russian friend of mine called on me in desperation. After its wanderings it was penniless: could I help him to find £500 instantly to charter a ship to carry it home? I took him to see the only man I knew, rich enough and generous enough, to help on this scale. Joseph Fels, who had himself escaped as a small boy from poverty and persecution in Russia, agreed at once to lend the money, and presently, with George Lansbury, all of us took a taxi to Southgate. Lenin was just finishing a three hours' speech of cold compelling logic, when we arrived. He sat down satisfied, for he had split his party for ever. Word ran round that the money had arrived and presently the leaders, one by one, were quitting the floor to thank Mr. Fels in the gallery. The Mensheviks came first, courteous and expansive. Then it was Trotsky's turn. I recall a sharp impression of physical distinction. He bore himself with assurance and a certain grace, and talked to us as if he enjoyed talking and meant to do it well. Down on the floor was still the squat, sturdy figure of Lenin, reluctant to play his part. His comrades hurried him to the stairs, and then he did what he had to do like the graceless bear he was. He thanked Mr. Fels in the fewest and baldest words, turned about and rushed away.

My next meeting with Trotsky was in Moscow in 1920. The unpunctuality of his colleagues had maddened me. I remember that Lunacharsky gave me three appointments and broke them all. Trotsky was punctual to the minute: the Red Army machine ran like clockwork. The former agitator and writer had dramatised himself with perfect success as a soldier, and his uniform fitted mind and body to a nicety. But, indeed, his work as the creator of the army that saved the Revolution was already a legend that placed him only second to Lenin in the heart of the masses. Immune to fatigue, he rushed in his armoured train to hearten the armies on every threatened front: he would in an emergency expose himself and lead the actual fighting with reckless courage: in the intervals, he worked at his desk in Moscow at the hardest job of all—organisation with the Russian temperament as the enemy.

He gave me leave to go to the front and I saw something of the army he had created both in Poland and on the front against Wrangel. Its transport operated with endless streams of two-wheeled peasants' carts: it had one airplane—or was it two?—and only a suggestion of artillery. But with these primitive means its organisation was surprisingly good, and the spirit in the ranks superb. The astonishing thing was that Trotsky did all this without even a smattering of military knowledge or experience. His secret was, I think, that he knew how to make the young soldiers (Tuchachevsky commanded on the Polish front at 26) his devoted admirers and partisans. They paid for their admiration in the purge.

As an orator Trotsky had an artist's sense of form. My Russian was poor and to listen to a long speech was a strain. I remember especially a demonstration in the Great Theatre in Moscow. To Zinoviev I hardly tried to listen, for his personality repelled me. Radek fatigued me, for he has a vile Polish accent. Then came Trotsky, lucid, articulate, a pleasure to hear and to see, and I found myself understanding every word. What particularly impressed me was his ability to play with wit and irony without lessening the force of his graver passages.

My impression of his fatal feud with Stalin was that it was fundamentally a personal rivalry. This brilliant romantic aroused the implacable dislike of a rival who had neither art nor charm. Trotsky relied on personality, Stalin on organisation, and organisation won. Each shifted his ground more than once in the battle over ideology and tactics. None the less, Stalin's "Socialism in one country" was the first statement of his later nationalism, and Trotsky was certainly by blood and temperament an internationalist. He was a mighty hater, and it is probable enough that he did plot against Stalin. But the dishonouring charges, notably that he plotted with the Nazis, rest on demonstrably false evidence. This gifted man was a brilliant writer, a great organiser of victory and an inspired revolutionary leader. But Nature made him a lieutenant and his life was sterile after Lenin's death.

H. N. BRAILSFORD


## Our Net Sales

During the six months January to June, 1940, the Fully-paid Net Sales of this paper averaged

**30,410 copies per week**

IN ADDITION THERE WERE 2,404 SUBSCRIPTIONS AT REDUCED RATES (WEEKLY AVERAGE OVER THE HALF YEAR) WHICH BRINGS THE TOTAL AVERAGE WEEKLY NET SALE FIGURE TO

**32,814 copies per week**

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# PLAYS AND PICTURES

### "Once a Crook," at the Aldwych

The subtleties, in farce and comedy-thriller, are left to the players. *Once a Crook* offers a sketch for a Gordon Harker part, and Mr. Harker (thank heaven) is there to take it. The emptiest lines gain power from the protrusion of that underlip; there is richness in the malapropisms ("very plausible") accompanied by check trousers and a yellow waistcoat; and one waits, of course, for the scene in which hauteur will wonderfully gild the accents of the Borough. If only this actor with a gift for cartooning could find a play which would make him stretch! Lucky Mr. Sinclair and his Paycock! Well, we've no O'Casey here, and our Cockney prancers have to make the most with detective stories. *Once a Crook* is adequate, *école de Wallace*. It provides a plot, some comedy, some thrills. Mr. Harker takes his ease in the part of an old safebreaker turned publican, struts, paces, prowls and growls, as Fate (in the person of a past accomplice) comes knocking at the door. A triumphal ending is, of course, always in sight and for much of the evening we relish the spectacle of Mr. Harker's comfortable hearth. It is a joy to watch him order and eat his breakfast kipper. The furniture and ornaments, the green wallpaper and red curtains and tablecloth have a loving faithfulness in their shades which warms both actors and audience; the hatch seems to give on to a real saloon bar from which now and then emerges an eccentric to have "one on the house." Mr. Richard Bird, oscillating between booze and repentance, makes a good Joxer to Mr. Harker's peacock, and Miss Margery Caldicott, in the part of an Aunty, turns on the hot and cold taps of femininity delightfully.

### "The Magic Flute," at Sadler's Wells

It is regrettable for more than one reason that critical notices have to be based on first-night performances, when everyone is keyed up and the production has not had time to settle down. The real test, even of a repertory company, is the "ordinary" performance. The severest test of all is the season's last performance of a work. The Sadler's Wells company passed that test with the *Magic Flute* last Saturday afternoon, and passed with honours. There was certainly no staleness or slackness, even in the orchestra where morale is most likely to deteriorate in these circumstances. Indeed, although apparently somewhat depleted by wartime conditions, the orchestra sometimes played more sensitively than the L.S.O. at the previous night's Prom. It is a little late in the day for a critic to throw bouquets to individual performers—particularly to Henry Wendon for his really princely Tamino, to Sumner Austin for his Papageno, to Joan Cross for her singing of "Ach, ich fühl's" (the real touchstone of a Pamina) and to Ruth Naylor for her more than plucky attempt at the impossible as Queen of the Night—but not too late to emphasise the courage of the company and the management in not merely carrying on with the projected season but actually extending it to September 7. Despite the financial loss—and every member of the company, orchestra, staff and management has voluntarily accepted a drastic cut in salary—it is hoped to reopen for an autumn season of opera and ballet at the beginning of October.

### "Young Tom Edison," at the Regal
### "Lillian Russell," at the Odeon

"Coming events cast their shadow before." That truism (familiar to filmgoers) has had a crippling effect on Hollywood's incursions into biography. Childhood seen in the light of later fame: nothing could be more to the taste, or further from the talents, of the average film producer. A host of clichés are unloosed; to the usual halos surrounding childhood is added the halo of misunderstanding; a dreadful glow bathes the family group, with as likely as not a father proud of the birch, a mother fondly believing. *Young Tom Edison* falls into most of the traps (compare this childhood, say, with *Poil de Carotte*), yet within the *genre* it is not at all bad entertainment. Young Tom (Mickey Rooney) carries his pug-face round with a likeable defiance, everyone (except mamma) agrees he is "addled," and the fact that he has a genius for "stinks" and not for poetry or scholarship makes eccentricity less reprehensible. He has a good improvising business-sense, too, and some of the most convincing scenes show him as a pioneer on the local railway, selling candy and his own news sheet to the passengers. When the film gets away from its tableaux of sprouting talent, from its air of quotable anecdotes, it is fresh, vivid and quite exciting. A roving truculence, and the mixture of acumen and reverie, strikes one as being authentic. The film ends with Tom Edison leaving home. A postscript informs us that at this point, in a future production, Spencer Tracey steps into the part. Perhaps in 1942 Charlie Grapevin will be called on to complete the cycle.

*Lillian Russell* is on easier ground. The glamour of a famous stage career throws the world at our feet, innumerable dressing-room callers, champagne suppers, mountains of flowers, first nights, theme songs and in this case a baby which looks delightfully detached from its surroundings. Some of the absurdities of the subject are inherent, like the diamond-studded bicycle given by an admirer. Others have been recklessly introduced by the producer. For example Alice Brady as the great Lillian sings a dripping modern lyric about love-birds that die alone, in the middle of Gilbert and Sullivan first night; and Gilbert is the first to bustle up and congratulate her. Still, *Lillian Russell* is lavish in spectacle and the fun of period. It stood up well to an air-raid warning, and that may soon be a criterion.

### "Barabau," at Sadler's Wells

Ninette de Valois' *Barabau* preserves the music and libretto by Rieti to which the ballet was originally composed for Diaghilev. The farcical misfortunes of a prosperous small landowner on whom a company of ill-mannered soldiers is billeted are given a slightly propagandist turn by changing the soldiers into black-shirts, of whom Frederick Ashton is the bombastic and relentless sergeant. He performs the part with brilliant verve and humour and unaccustomed solidity. Molly Brown, as a peasant woman, partners him admirably. Robert Helpmann in the principal part is equally brilliant, but why must an Italian or French peasant of substance be always represented in current ballet convention with the traditionally devious flashiness of a Levantine Jew? Robert Helpmann's excellent and witty dancing would have had even more scope if he had been cast as a prosperous, rather dowdy pre-Fascist liberal instead of as an oily, orange-clad Levantine covered in rings. Someone was heard to remark that the rustic chorus, penned up on one side of the stage, resembled a Welsh Eisteddfod which had somehow strayed to Hampstead Heath on a Bank Holiday. Edward Burra's decor is fresh and amusing, and the lively evolutions of the gardening *corps-de-ballet* combined with their large round black hats and wide skirts to make some delightful flower-bed pictures. *Barabau* is a witty militarist skit, which by a happy decorative inspiration is applied to Fascism.

### War Artists at the National Gallery

A new room has been added to the exhibition of paintings by official war artists, and the whole show has been rehung. The changes are a considerable improvement. The new room contains a quota of Ardizzone's funny and subjective illustrations, some efficient drawings by Sir William Rothenstein, some slick and lively ones by the now renowned midshipman Worsley as well as a charmingly modest and unaffected ward-room scene by Sir Muirhead Bone. Keith Henderson has some more of his curiously pale and dry pictures (one or two like *Testing an Undercarriage* remarkably successful). The show includes the three most remarkable efforts which artists have so far made to record the war. All three are inspired by the air war. The most striking are Paul Nash's water colours of the shot-down German planes. Here, high and dry on a beach below chalk cliffs, lies the tail of a terrible fish, the head ferociously snapped off; here, awash like a drowned sea gull, the outlines of the bomber are like a shadow in the sea. Paul Nash has never had such strange significant drift-wood to let his imagination work on; his burnt-out skeleton of a bomber in a cornfield is an image which surpasses his stone age in magic. Graham Sutherland's bombers are no less strange and terrifying, magnified beetles in arc-lights, livid or phosphorescent. The ideas are terrifying, incomprehensible and uncontrollable. Rodrigo Moynihan's version of the facts is strangely different. Here the bombers are less, they stand with a little knot of men round them on the dewy grass in the pearly morning. Everyone who has met members of the R.A.F. must recognise the truth of the picture. It is unemphatic, undramatised. One can imagine the airmen and their friends standing round exchanging messages and keepsakes before they take off. Sutherland has expressed the terror of huge forces gone wrong, Moynihan the modest courage of individuals.

## THE COMING WEEK

SUNDAY, September 1st—
- Opening of Workers' Music Association at 9 Gt. Newport Street, W.C.2, 7.

MONDAY, September 2nd—
- Poetry Reading by Michael Redgrave, Central Hall, 1.15. Collection for British Red Cross Fund.

TUESDAY, September 3rd—
- China Campaign Committee. Luncheon Lecture. Hsiao Ch'ien, "Chinese Newspapers in Wartime," Ley On's Chinese Restaurant, 91 Wardour Street, 1. Tickets 2s. 6d. from 34 Victoria Street, S.W.1.
- Lunch Time Concert, St. George's Church, Bloomsbury, 12.45.
- "The Match Girls," Unity Theatre.

WEDNESDAY, September 4th—
- Michael Foot: "The Press in Wartime," Federal Union Lunch Club, "Falstaff," Fleet Street, 1.
- Dramatic Entertainment in English and French by Edward Stirling and Margaret Vaughan. Institut Français, 5.

"In Town Again," Criterion.

# Correspondence

## CIVILIAN ROLL OF HONOUR

SIR,—We are told that Great Britain is now a fortress, and, to quote Sir John Anderson, "the people are all in the front line of the battle." But, if this be the case, why does not the published "Roll of Honour" include the names of all civilians killed and seriously wounded in enemy air-attack? These men and women working in the factories, the fields, the offices, the homes of our country, are equally with our armed forces defending it. But, in the case of civilians, their deaths and injuries are veiled under some such phrase as: "A number of casualties took place in a S.E. town, several of them fatal." The rest is shrouded in obscurity.

Doubtless for military reasons it is usually unwise to mention the name of the town or village in which the casualties have taken place. But what possible objection can there be to giving the name of each casualty, adding, if possible, the casualty's age, and

the name of the next of kin in order to make identification certain? Such an official list of the civilian dead and injured would be the best answer to Germany, and, indeed, to other foreign countries, who maintain that our losses in this war have been ludicrously minimised and that no credence should be given to the Prime Minister's statement last week that the British casualties (almost entirely military) in the first year of the Great War were four times as great as the total loss, including civilians killed and wounded, in this war.

It is, however, chiefly from the point of view of its effect in this country that I suggest a regular official return of fallen civilians. A public honouring of the dead would, in most cases, bring a little comfort to the sore hearts of those who are left behind.

Publication of such lists would certainly be turned down by the Ministry of Information. If, however, the idea could be brought to the notice of Mr. Churchill himself, his imaginative genius might cause him to give it serious consideration. With our people, the publication of a civilian Roll of Honour, however long it became, is unlikely to depress them. Their spirit is already high; it would raise it still higher. It would serve as a blazon to mark our march along the road to victory. E. ZANGWILL

## WARTIME SURVEY

SIR,—Your correspondent, John D. Spooner, ventures to forecast that eventually democracy will be superseded by sciocracy, i.e., government by knowledge, the knowledge being gained by scientific investigation of public opinion. Unfortunately, however, knowledge of what the public are thinking and feeling does not imply good government, it may only mean the perfecting of an instrument whereby the people are more skilfully managed to serve the ends of those who govern. But granted that the will exists to bring about a government of the people, by the people and for the people, the science of social investigation can be of invaluable service in bringing light to the dark expanses which exist in the public's political consciousness.

There is a natural tendency for the chosen leaders who sit in Parliament and the self-chosen leaders of the Press to profess to understand and to interpret public opinion. The justification for such claims to omniscience must obviously be slight, but the strength of these vested interests in leadership has been shown in recent weeks by the concerted onslaught on the Social Survey of the M. of I. It will be a grave pity if the attack is successful in stopping or hampering what appears to be a sincere attempt to assess objectively the reactions of the nation to its circumstances and conditions.

In wartime such an assessment is of prime importance, in peace it can make a considerable contribution to democracy, provided safeguards exist to prevent abuse.

One of the most valuable functions of periodic surveys is to measure mass movements of an anti-democratic or anti-social nature and to reveal their directions and tendencies. In the U.S.A. the Gallup and Roper Surveys have acted as storm warnings in indicating anti-Labour hysteria, susceptibility to Fascist slogans, growth of anti-Semitism, political corruption and so on. It is only by scientific methods of investigation that such dangers can be estimated in approximately their true proportions. Editorial pronouncements and electoral dogmatism, being based at best on subjective thought processes, can be positively dangerous.

Whether investigations of public opinion should be a matter of private enterprise or the concern of the Government is a moot point. Probably a combination of both would provide the necessary checks on abuse. Discrepancies between competitive commercial organisations would serve to disclose weaknesses of technique, while the publication of independent surveys would ensure a fair amount of objectivity in the surveys of a Government-sponsored organisation. J. P. MCNULTY,

The Advertising Service Guild, Hon Sec.
10 Hertford Street,
London, W.1.

## MR. WELLS AND THE FUTURE

SIR,—Mr. Wells and I cannot continue indefinitely to indulge ourselves in the publicity of open letters and my reply—for there must be a reply—though open, had better be relegated to the decent obscurity of your correspondence columns. I confine myself to two points. First, as to the nature of scientists. Why, Mr. Wells asks, the implied derogation of my phrase "conceived—God help us!—in the likeness of scientists"? as a response to his recommendation of scientists as chief candidates for the "educational élite" who are to be entrusted with the impending world reconstruction. Let me assure him that I do not wish for a moment to deny the value of the scientific temper of mind, if that be taken to imply patience in accumulating facts, objective consideration of the facts accumulated, and dispassionate estimate of the situation issuing in right judgment as to action. Admittedly this temper is valuable. But what evidence do scientists give of possessing it outside the particular department of their special knowledge. If Mr. Wells will take these biologists, psychologists, geologists and the rest out of their special provinces and confront them with the problems of our times, he will find that they remind him of nothing so much as bees on a window pane; for he will not be able to avoid being struck by the respect for evidence and impartiality of attitude displayed by the organism in its accustomed environment and the disregard for evidence and the all too human attitudes displayed outside it. I should say that by and large—and here I am sorry to give pain to Mr. Wells—the people educated in the classical literary tradition cut a better figure, when it comes to dealing with the predicament of our civilisation than the average scientific worker. They certainly display more interest; so much more, that when a Hogben, a Haldane, a Huxley, or a Bernal *does* evince a disposition to take a hand in the job of salvaging our civilisation, we regard the phenomenon as, in a scientist, so unusual that we never stop talking about it. The celebrity of these deservedly admired scientists is, indeed, the measure of their unrepresentativeness. Before leaving this point, I cannot resist the temptation of pointing out that the frequency of Mr. Wells's own scoldings of scientists for precisely this fault of indifference and the eagerness with which they have repudiated the role which he would thrust upon them—their job, they have pointed out, is to do research; what society likes to do with the results of their research is not their concern—constitute a sufficient endorsement of my "scientists—God help us." Nor can I see the slightest evidence of the spread of its "scientific spirit into human affairs." On the contrary I doubt if there was ever a time when propaganda had so completely usurped the place of information, when reckless assertion was so readily accepted as fact, or when truth was so universally prostituted to the use of publicity and advertisement.

Secondly, as to my charge of vagueness. Here, I must confess to have been slightly nettled by Mr. Wells's treatment of Federal Union. This is an organisation which was established some months before the war to advocate Federation and to study its problems. Not only has it established research committees to deal with particular aspects of Federation, with colonies, with economics, with the federal constitution and federal law, committees which are manned by experts, but it has seriously tackled the job of converting public opinion to federal ideas. In recent months it has explored and advertised the potentialities of Federation as a war-winning weapon and given detailed consideration to the problems involved in the transition from national to federal sovereignty in the conditions that are likely to arise at the end of the war. I should like in this connection to draw Mr. Wells's attention to the recently published pamphlet "How We Shall Win," which you yourself, sir, have been good enough to praise, which goes in detail into all these matters.

Now all this careful research, this detailed consideration, this intensive and spreading propaganda, Mr. Wells stigmatises as "just a vague project for doing nothing," while the hard work which Federalists have devoted to special problems falling within their own province is dismissed with such phrases as "the reverie of an able lawyer" (this on Dr. Jenning's "A Federation for Wartime Europe") or "I have watched Mr. Wickham Steed playing at this game—a game for boys who have never grown older—all my life." It seems to me that in the light of these strictures one is entitled to expect from Wells something very definite and detailed indeed. Instead one finds recommendations for the establishment of a Standing Armistice at the end of the war which (it is hoped) will develop into a series of Permanent World Commissions, which (it is hoped) will in their turn develop into a Federal Government or a number of such governments. When we ask for the grounds on which these hopes are based, we are given nothing more solid than Mr. Wells's conception of the emergence of a "spreading and educational elite" gathered together into "an *ad hoc* federation of the intellectual organisations of the world" to constitute a "collective opposition inspired by the idea of world unity." This, presumably, is the sort of thing that Mr. Wells means by "an entirely concrete and practicable idea." I can only say that to me it seems utterly Utopian. "Writers of the world, unite; you have nothing to lose but your brains." The exhortation—I think it was Dos Passos's—was addressed to intellectuals just after the last war; but they did not unite; they don't and I do not believe that they will. Mr. Wells and I and you, sir, and most of the readers of this paper admittedly want much the same things. But Wells differs from us in thinking that the mere fact of our wanting them will mysteriously cause them to be translated into reality through a spontaneous coalescence of the minds of the wanters. And this in a book containing a chapter headed "The Puerility of Federal Union Schemes." C. E. M. JOAD

4 East Heath Road, N.W.3.

## FÜHRERPRINZIP

SIR,—When Mr. Woolf, in a book review, suggests that the public schools are a bulwark against the growth of democracy and democratic Socialism, and produce a type of "little Führer" (a view which, I should guess, the great majority of democrats and Socialists would accept), he is taken to task by a correspondent who "presumes" ironically that the ideal post-war society is to have no leaders. But Mr. Woolf is using words correctly, as is his habit: the *Führerprinzip* and leadership of the kind that democracy needs are almost direct opposites. The *Führerprinzip* has a respectable—or if you like disreputable, but at any rate an ancient—lineage in political philosophy. Somewhere in the remoter branches of its genealogical tree is Thrasymachus of the Republic; Fichte is its grandfather, Bergson and Gentile its aunts, and Darwin was perhaps a godfather by proxy. According to this theory, the Leader emerges at the top by a mystical process, which I have nowhere seen satisfactorily explained, and proceeds to embody the General Will in a manner that would have horrified the prophet Rousseau, until he is translated to Valhalla. The whole hierarchy operates from above downwards, and the Leader is responsible to nobody—except perhaps the tribal god who is normally kept in his pocket, and only taken out on special occasions to have his head patted. This is the system which is supported by more people in England than are aware of it, and the public schools are still a good training ground for it—though not so good as they used to be. Of course they produce occasional good Socialists, as the Chinaman's burning house produced roast pig, and about as expensively. Democratic leadership, on the other hand, is based on universal suffrage, the secret ballot, open discussion, access to knowledge and a wide toleration of minority opinion and action; it derives its power from below, upwards, and is responsible to its electorate all along. That is the system which is supported by some few schools which I have called, not happily I know, progressive. The three fundamentals of progressive education are a large measure of self-government by children (authority in public schools is arbitrarily imposed from without), a co-operative ethic (nowhere in our national life is there an intenser emphasis on individual competitiveness than in the public school) and an upbringing shared by the sexes (those schools light-heartedly ignore the whole problem of the right relationship between men and women); and together they form, I would claim, a positive training in democratic Socialism.

Arundale House, L. B. PEKIN
Letchworth.

## THE WAR AND THE U.D.C.

SIR,—Hitler's anxiety to pose before the peoples of the world as the reluctant victim of the "will to war" in Britain is probably indicative of his estimate of the deep, though hidden, desire for peace among the German population. In reply it is not enough to depend for an answer to his public announcements of his "desire for peace," on simple statements of patriotism and vague aspirations for a better world no matter how sincere. It is an obvious duty for us

to rob him of any plausible basis for such a pose by unmasking his real role as international law-breaker and war-monger. This can be done only by explaining to the peoples of the world, in language they can understand and in terms to which they will respond, the objects for which this country fights.

We don't expect our Government to declare in detail a peace settlement for the post-war world whose form and circumstances no man can foresee. But the general principles on acceptance of which war could be brought to an end and on which a durable peace could be founded can and should be stated. Their clear statement by the Government is urgently necessary not only as the basis of a durable peace but for the effective prosecution of the war.

Real victory in the war is more than a matter of military success. The Nazi and Fascist systems within Germany and Italy, with all their menace to the world, can be finally destroyed only by the German and Italian peoples themselves. The present apparent national unity of these peoples is a brittle thing unlikely to withstand the shock of military defeat. In both countries there is an important body of latent antagonism to the regimes. Though now submerged in the glories of the military triumphs of the Nazis, this antagonism will assert itself under the right conditions. It is one of our tasks to produce these conditions.

We must accompany our efforts for military victory with clear statements of the principles on which our objects are based directed to our potential allies within Germany and Italy and also to the peoples of the conquered countries of Europe. They are now our friends and will one day be our allies. We must stimulate their hopes and encourage their resistance to tyranny.

While it would be unreasonable to expect the Government at this time to formulate a peace programme in detail, it is of the greatest importance that discussion of such a programme should begin within our democracy. Our bitter experiences since 1918 show how easy it is to lose a peace after having won a war. We must form a body of public opinion educated in the essentials of a durable peace and aware of the means necessary to achieve it. Such a task needs to be initiated and directed by independent organisations.

It is welcome news, therefore, that the Union of Democratic Control, which is well qualified by its long experience and knowledge of such work, is giving a lead in this direction. While we cannot commit ourselves to acceptance of the Union's detailed proposals, we are convinced that, if a good peace and a rational and stable world are to be forged from the wreckage which will be left by the war, we must begin to think and plan for it now. In that conviction, therefore, we give our cordial support to the Union's enterprise.

H. G. WELLS,* THE MASTER OF BALLIOL, NOEL-BUXTON, OLIVIER, W. B. BRIERLEY, H. J. LASKI, WICKHAM STEED, R. H. TAWNEY, STORM JAMESON, H. W. NEVINSON, EVA M. HUBBACK, KINGSLEY MARTIN, MAUDE ROYDEN, SYDNEY R. ELLIOT, RICHARD GREGORY, Bt., F.R.S., THE BISHOP OF CHELMSFORD, PARMOOR, STRABOLGI, NORMAN BENTWICH, C. E. M. JOAD, OLAF STAPLEDON, LEONARD WOOLF, S. MARGERY FRY, H. LEVY, EMMELINE PETHICK-LAWRENCE, H. N. BRAILSFORD, A. CREECH JONES, M.P., WILFRED ROBERTS, M.P.

* Mr. Wells dissents from the phrase "the glories of the military triumphs of the Nazis" as he states that he "is not impressed by these 'triumphs' and is convinced that the outcome of the fighting, as fighting, is bound to be a conclusive defeat of Germany."

## C. Os

SIR,—It was recently decided by the Cheshire County Council that any conscientious objectors among its employees should be dismissed. THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION has already pointed out that decisions of this type are not only unjust to the individuals concerned but are also against the declared policy of the Government.

Three teachers in a local secondary school have been dismissed. No reason was given for this action but all three had registered as conscientious objectors. They have not yet even appeared before a tribunal.

Even the legality of the action is open to question. If, when their cases are tried, they express willingness to undertake non-combatant duties, then, for the purposes of the National Service Act, they cease to be conscientious objectors. Being liable for service under the Act, they are also protected by it, and there is legal authority for the opinion that the County Council would be obliged to reinstate them.

Quite apart from the question of legality, the Council has not troubled to investigate either the sincerity of the men concerned, or the results which such dismissals have upon the schools affected.

Two points may be mentioned which illustrate the sincerity of these men. One of them is over thirty and is therefore in a reserved occupation. His case would therefore never have been brought before a Tribunal. Had he chosen to conceal the fact that he had registered as a conscientious objector, he could have retained his job, and still avoided taking an active part in the war. Another has recently refused work in industry because he would have been required to work on toxic substances.

As for the effect which the dismissals will have upon this particular school, it has already lost or is about to lose, nearly half its teaching staff, through the claims of national service. This cannot be an isolated case, and replacements under wartime conditions will be difficult and probably impossible to obtain. The net effect of the Council's patriotic gesture is therefore to weaken still further an already weakened personnel and thrust three men into idleness, whose efficiency at their work is not even questioned. The council apparently prefers that children's education should be neglected, and their lives risked in air raids through lack of sufficient staff to maintain the necessary discipline, rather than have them contaminated by pacifism.

Is it not time that the Government, which after all, through its grants, controls all local authorities, took steps to stop such gratuitous acts of disservice to the national effort? E. F. PENNISON

## TWO LANDLADIES

SIR,—The sketch, *Two Landladies*, in your current issue, links up with some observations of my own.

I suppose it is no revelation of national secrets to say that there are, in various obscure parts of the country, large new installations connected with the war effort. On recent visits to some of these I have found an almost total lack of accommodation, not only for the casual visitor but also for the permanent staffs, who as a rule are both able and eager to pay for good quarters, were any such to be had. At one very large place of this kind I found the one hotel full of—let us say—admirals, while the technical staffs, university men earning good salaries, were cluttered in comfortless lodging-houses and thinking themselves fortunate to be there. Some of them had been living in this way for a couple of years or more.

Because of these new installations, the big houses in the neighbourhoods are often empty: their occupants staying indefinitely with Mrs. Brown in Cornwall. Instead of letting Mrs. Jones put her head into the gas-oven, how about making use of her catering experience by installing her in the deserted big house and affording a reasonable modicum of comfort for the executives referred to? If the Government, in addition, felt disposed to compensate the owner of the big house, joy would then be absolutely general. Even without such compensation, the majority of the parties concerned would be much better off. MORCHARD BISHOP

6 Belgrave Road,
Chester.

## REFUGEES

SIR,—After a report of our Secretary, Miss E. Kolmer, a meeting of the Austrian Centre, attended by about 200 members, unanimously adopted the resolution to thank THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION warmly for its effective defence of the cause of the refugees and for its perfect understanding of the refugee problem.

We inform you of this resolution and add our own sincere thanks asking not to relax your support for the unfortunate Austrian and German refugees in this country. SCHIFF,
The Chairman

Austrian Centre,
124, 126, 132, Westbourne
Terrace, W.2.

## CHARLIE CHAPLIN

SIR,—Without wishing to be pedantic, I would like, in the cause of historical accuracy, to point out that the second comedian in *Charlie at the Show*, an early Chaplin recently revived at the Cameo, Charing Cross Road, is Ben Turpin, not Chester Conklin. H. D. WALEY,
Technical Director

The British Film Institute.

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# Current Literature

## BOOKS IN GENERAL

THE time of the year and the year itself are unknown, but one day, well before the French Revolution, a tall, good-looking, fair-haired youth was hanging about dejectedly on the quay at Ostend seeking for a boat which would take him to America. Arras was his native town but Arras could not hold him. His energy, his vitality, his hopes demanded a larger land. Unhappily the only boats going to America were far too expensive for him, and he stood on the quay lonely, homesick and in despair. He was in this state when a stranger fell into conversation with him, a stranger who turned out to be a shipping agent and who explained that once you knew the ropes it was the simplest thing on earth to find a ship. He, personally, would see to it. The two men went off to an inn to discuss the matter further. What happened after that was never quite clear to the youth. There had been good food and drink; there appeared to have been some "dames fort aimables" whose hospitality was of "the antique kind" which did not stop at the table; he even had some recollection of being in a pleasant if rotating room and under the same eiderdown as one of the ladies. All the more astonishing therefore to wake up in the morning and find himself lying half naked on a pile of ropes—the only ones he was to learn about—with only a couple of écus in his pockets. A sad story and, as the innkeeper said, he ought to be grateful that worse had not happened. But this was not the appropriate moral. The money with which Eugène-François Vidocq had planned to pay his fare to America had been stolen from his mother's baker's shop in Arras. The theft was the first major enterprise—hitherto he had only tickled pennies out of the slot in the counter with a feather dipped in glue—in a picaresque career which was to lead Eugène-François into the French, Austrian and revolutionary armies, into the perpetual company of criminals, all over the roads of France and into most of the prisons, until at last, an artist in escape and quick changes, he arrived at the Sûreté in Paris not as a convict but as its Director. To his legend as a criminal was to be added a new legend as a detective. He was to be the first of the Big Four.

The astonishing story of the life of Vidocq can be read in two French biographies, notably one by Jagot published in 1928; a far fuller and livelier account, however, is contained in the four volumes of Vidocq's own *Mémoires* published in 1829 of which, as far as I know, no complete English translation exists. A French edition in 2 volumes is published by Librairie Gründ, 9d. each. The *Mémoires* are said not to be his own work, but whoever wrote it the book is enormously readable, especially the opening volume. This early narrative has the rapidity, the nonchalance, the variety and non-stop intrigue of the good picaresque novels; and in it Vidocq is a living man and not a mere first person singular. If he touched up his own past or if someone else touched it up for him, introducing romantic coincidences—Vidocq was always running into his ex-wife, his discarded mistresses or ill-intentioned fellow prisoners, at the least desirable moments—the story gains in romance and ingenuity.

To describe Vidocq as a great criminal is perhaps inaccurate. Rather he was a reckless, adventurous young man with a gift for trouble, a true *tête brûlée*. The Revolution, the war with Austria, the amateur and professional armies of the period, were his environment; the armies were recruited, dissolved, changed sides—he once went over to the Austrians to get out of trouble—and, in default of pay, lived on their wits. Brussels was a hive of knavery and there Vidocq found himself posing as an officer and plotting a bigamous marriage with an elderly baroness. There is some charm in his account of how his nerve went and of how he confessed to the lady. After the Ostend episode he had avoided theft and had tried to settle down with a circus. His employer attempted to make him into an acrobat and failed; the alternative was the role of the noble savage, but he found this uncongenial, indeed terrifying: he was expected to eat birds alive and swallow stones. His next master was a wandering quack and knave who swindled farmers and who took Vidocq back to Arras, where his adventures and an orgy of forgiveness by his parents at once made him famous. Vidocq no doubt boasted. He was a great talker and something of an actor. Soon he had mistresses all over the town, was fighting duels or was assaulting those who refused to fight. He found himself at last in prison.

Here one picks up the recurring pattern of Vidocq's life. Gaoled because of one woman he intrigues with another to get him out—going this time to the length of marriage—but once out, the jealousy or unfaithfulness of the rescuing lady drives him again into hiding. It is a continually repeated story. Worse than his infidelity was his lack of tact. A girl called Francine, for example, risked everything to aid his escape from one gaol; yet, such was his crassness or his ill-luck, he walked straight out of the prison gates into the arms of an old mistress and unwisely spent the night with her. This was too much for the faithful, or at least sacrificial, Francine. It seemed to her—and to many others—that the best way to be assured of Vidocq was to get him back to prison as soon as possible. Vidocq made no pretence to virtue and delighted in the mystery which gradually grew around his character. He had the vanity of a child. Later on he was to describe with a proper sardonic agony how, when escaping from the police in Brittany and disguised as a nun, he was obliged by a farmer and his wife to occupy the same bed as their daughters, in the interests of propriety. Such a trial by fire is the special province of picaresque literature.

The other element in the Vidocq pattern is his faculty for escape. Vidocq always held that his big conviction was unjust and that he was "framed" by a fellow prisoner. To escape was therefore a matter of justice and duty. There is something moving in this very vital man's continual struggles for liberty. The fame of his escapes eclipsed whatever other notoriety he had. At Arras the disconsolate police were driven to put out the legend that he was a were-wolf. One gendarme swore that as he laid hands on him, Vidocq turned into a bale of straw.

Awaiting trial, for example, he simply picked up the coat and helmet of the guard which had been put on a bench near by and walked unmolested out of court. On another occasion he locked the police up in his room. Over and over again he enjoyed the comedy of leading an unsuspecting police officer on to saying what he would do with Vidocq when he caught him. Jumping out of cabs, leaving prison by a rope at the window, sawing through manacles, digging tunnels out of gaol or making his escort drunk, became a routine. In Arras, where he was very much wanted, he lived for a year disguised as an Austrian officer and neither his family, the police nor the girl he lived with, who had known him well before, discovered his true identity.

For twelve years, while he was supposedly serving a long sentence, Vidocq was more often out of prison than in it. But it was an exhausting life; freedom was constantly menaced by black-mailing associates and just when he seemed to have settled down happily as a draper—he desired nothing better!—he met his divorced wife and found himself keeping her and her relatives in order to keep their mouths shut. The worm turned. He went to the Chief of Police and made him an offer. Pardon him, leave him in peace, Vidocq said, and he would help them to capture all the criminals they desired. It cannot be said that this second period of respectable fame makes entirely comfortable reading. He delivered "the goods" of course; no one could approach him for no one else had his knowledge of the underworld. The vanity of criminals is as inexhaustible as their love of the great figure; a burglar or assassin, however great in his own esteem, was flattered if the great and mysterious Vidocq sat down with him at the table of some shabby *marchand de vin*. Vidocq decoyed them with ease or effrontery, as the case demanded. With a rather devilish gusto he will tell how hearing So-and-So was wanted he would go to the house of the man's mistress, announce her man had been caught, install himself with the lady for a few days and (his own mistress aiding him), would get to know the whole gang, and, at the right moment, strike. It is a little embarrassing. The authorities themselves became embarrassed. The law never feels very happy about the *agent provocateur*.

The *Mémoires* of Vidocq are by a man who hugely enjoyed his life both as a fugitive and a pursuer of fugitives. He had an eye for character and there are some admirable farces of low life such as his adventures with the drunken colonial sergeant and their riotous visits to the brothels. The dialogue is racy and real. His portraits of the innumerable "dames fort aimables" are very vivid. He is delighted with himself as a detective. There is a search, at one period, for a house where a hunchback girl lives in a quarter which at first seems to have no hunchbacks. Hunchbacks (Vidocq reasons) are natural gossips—especially about love affairs; they are also very respectable. Disguised as a respectable man of 60 he sets out to search the creameries which are the best centres of gossip. Sure enough a hunchback appears, a very Venus of hunchbacks, of course, a great-eyed creature like a medieval fairy. Posing as a wronged husband, Vidocq soon discovers who is living in sin in the house and so traces his victims.

One can hardly call this subtle but the methods of Vidocq were made for the chaotic period of the Napoleonic wars and their aftermath when France swarmed with criminals. Later on, more systematic and respectable means were wanted. His day came to an end and he had the mortification of seeing another reformed criminal, his secretary, one Coco Lacour, succeed him. Coco had reformed in earnest. He had gone to the Jesuits, who made him and his wife do public repentance bare-footed in the streets. A coolness existed between Vidocq and Coco. Coco was a miserable man with no air of the gentleman about him and Vidocq had pointed out that a touch more polish in his conversation as a member of the Big Four would be an advantage. (After all, Vidocq had very nearly married a baroness, a Belgian baroness it is true, but still. . . .) Coco resented his lessons in etiquette. Vidocq, in his jealousy, has drawn a very funny portrait of the little man sitting all day by the Pont Neuf fishing while, at home, his wife is doing a good trade in clothes with prostitutes.

Once out of favour Vidocq is said to have faked a robbery and then to have made arrests to show how clever he was; but the trick was discovered and the words *agent provocateur* finally doomed him. He started a paper factory which failed, a detective agency which declined into triviality. He died at last in poverty. There is one sentence in his Memoirs which I like to think he really wrote:

> Les voleurs de profession (it says) sont tous ceux qui volontairement ou non, ont contracté l'habitude de s'approprier le bien d'autrui.

V. S. PRITCHETT

## A SELF-MADE PATRICIAN

**Memory Hold-the-Door.** The Autobiography of John Buchan. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 12s. 6d.

I respected the working classes so profoundly that, like William Morris, I did not want to see them turned into middle classes, as some of their patrons desired. My upbringing had made any kind of class-feeling impossible. I was one of the poor myself without a penny behind me, compelled to make my way in the world from nearly as bare a start as the lad from the plough-tail or the loom. I had a better education, came of better stock and had better health than most—these were my sole advantages. But, except for the first, it did not seem to me that politicians could do much about them.

So Lord Tweedsmuir, late Governor-General of Canada, in one of the many revealing passages of his memoirs. John Buchan was a son of the manse, brought up by a mother whose Calvinist piety yet permitted her to give her children a free rein. He was a boy of really remarkable intellectual and physical capacities, born, you would have said, not for a life of social achievement but of hard, creative action. Here was someone, who at the turn of the last century might have become a leader of a new democratic Britain. And yet, only two years of his life—the happiest by all accounts—were spent in such action, when he joined Lord Milner's staff in South Africa. There for a brief spell he lived at full stretch. Then suddenly the tension relaxed; Buchan the man of action became Buchan the publisher and story-teller, the intimate of everyone who mattered, the Squire of Elsfield—and finally Lord Tweedsmuir. A successful life, but successful not in creation but in the establishment of a position within the traditional order.

You will reply that John Buchan moved from the world of action to that of literature. But that is not his own account of the matter. He only devotes a few pages to his books, and describes his writing as a leisure activity, developed chiefly in years of ill-health. Here, as so often, he reveals a remarkable honesty of self-criticism. He knew precisely his own qualities—a first-rate story-teller, a competent amateur historian, a second-rate thinker, for whom philosophy was "an intellectual exercise, like mathematics, not the quest for a faith." No, the failure of John Buchan, the man of action, cannot be accounted for in this way.

The real solution is given by Lord Tweedsmuir himself in this remarkable book. From Glasgow University he won a classical scholarship to Oxford, and came South, a poor scholar with £100 a year. A new world opened its gates to him. Working industriously for his "firsts," he met the patricians, above all Raymond Asquith, on equal terms. He debated with them in the Union, hunted with them, partook of their exquisite conversation and earned his place in the society of which they were the heirs. At Oxford, like so many others, he found his rank and lost himself. If he could earn enough money to keep his place among these friends, he would be content. Oxford and a classical education had given him "a sense of values."

Critics have accused John Buchan of snobbery, but this is unjust. His ambition was not social success, but to live the life of a gentleman of modern Athens. And, as Aristotle had taught him, it is not the part of a gentleman to do any one thing too well, to concern himself with money, or to be ambitious of power. The gentleman is, by definition, the amateur even in literature and politics: his aim is not success, but the good life. Even when the world is falling about his ears, he retains his poise. So the brilliant young Scot refused the fellowship offered him and read for the Bar. Then followed the two years in South Africa, which almost broke his sense of values. But the


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modern Athens reasserted herself. John Buchan returned to London society, joined the publishing firm of Nelson's and married into the Grosvenor family. In 1919 he purchased the manor house of Elsfield, near Oxford, and settled down to the life of the modern Squire with his business in London. From 1927 to 1935 he was M.P. for the Scottish Universities: he died Governor-General of Canada. The ambitions of his undergraduate days had been realised. He had lived the life of the gentleman, in all its phases.

And yet *Memory Hold-the-Door* is full of undertones of uncertainty and discontent. Suddenly, amid the good-natured character sketches of the great and the good and the descriptions of the Scotch moors and the Oxfordshire countryside, of which the book is largely composed, John Buchan catches sight of himself and his associates in the mirror of history—and jibs at the reflection. There is a momentary convulsive twitch, and then the urbane discourse continues. Is this because he knew that he did not quite belong with those associates, whose company he so intensely enjoyed, whose personalities he described so tenderly? The son of the manse who joined all the best clubs at Oxford, dined out in the best society and later married into it and bought himself a squiredom, retained the self-consciousness of the self-made patrician—and that is what gives his autobiography its enduring place in our social history. John Buchan was complacent, but he was too intelligent to be smug.

"Cockney-Suburbanism," he writes, "was always my secret terror." His ambition was neither commercial nor literary success but the life of culture, and his first model was Raymond Asquith, who wrote to him:

> The day of the clever cad is at hand: I always felt it would come to this if we let ourselves in for an Empire. If only Englishmen had known their Aeschylus a little better they wouldn't have bustled about the world appropriating things. . . . It would have been so much pleasanter to live in a small community who knew Greek and played games and washed themselves.

To this height of exquisite decadence John Buchan could never quite attain. Though, as he candidly states, his classical education purged him of any rebellious leanings and made him a detached non-party Conservative, he retained the vigour of his class, and the austerity of his Calvinist religion. He was aware that this patrician culture was doomed, and that the parliamentary conflict of the Liberal epoch was a mere debate between gentlemen who neither understood nor expressed the real social struggle beneath the surface. Writing of Grey, he observes:

> Half a century earlier he would have been a very great Foreign Minister, but he was a man of his era, and that era had passed. The position of Britain in Europe had radically changed and the old business of wise compromise and nice adjustment was out of date. New, strange, inconsequent forces were at work. He felt these forces but he did not understand them. Perhaps no man did.

And of Asquith:

> He was a most competent head of a traditional Government and a brilliant leader of a traditional party. But he was firmly set in the old ways. . . . Like his colleagues, he was immensely intelligent but he was impercipient.

John Buchan was percipient, but he saw the abyss in the mirror of the modern Athens, to which his Oxford successes had given him the entry. Even the proconsular dreams of Milner faded and he became a Conservative candidate in 1911, not from an urgent sense of duty but because a gentleman undertakes "public service" as a leisure activity. The glove fitted to perfection, and in true Conservative vein he can write of his electioneering: "It was not canvassing, for I rarely mentioned politics"; and later can describe his term in Parliament—between 1927 and 1935—as a time when "there were no great political storms blowing." But then, a few lines later, without consciousness of the contradiction, he remarks:

> I remember being puzzled by the flatness of everything and wondering uneasily if it were not the calm before the storm. I longed for someone of prophetic strain, someone like Mr. Gladstone, to trouble the waters even at the expense of our peace of mind.

One would have thought that in 1935 there were enough prophets troubling the waters of Europe. But John Buchan was exacting in his demands of the prophets. Throughout this book, he condemns the intellectuals from the Philosophic Radicals to Sir Stafford Cripps as boring ideologues, for whom neither the patrician nor the common people have any time. He looked for a sign but he would not see it unless it occurred in the correct quarter of the heavens: he waited for a modern Cromwell, but meanwhile he accepted the ceremonial offices which were showered upon him by the modern Cavaliers.

Here, perhaps, we have hit on the secret not only of John Buchan but of his age. The young and virile forces in this country which should have led the New Model Army had deserted to the other side, or rather had been suborned by their education and careers into an acceptance of a world which they knew in their heart of hearts was doomed. As a boy, John Buchan—like his friend, Ramsay MacDonald (and how many others?)—had dreamed dreams of stirring action to dissipate the shades of the prison house and to rejuvenate their country. But when he entered the prison house at Oxford, when he explored its cells in London Society and hobnobbed with its warders as Squire of Elsfield, his mood changed. It was no prison but the Land of the Lotus-eaters to which he had come. There, in the trappings of the Chief Moderator of the Church of Scotland or the Governor-General of Canada, he could seek to preserve the culture of Raymond Asquith:

> Let us swear an oath and keep it with an equal mind,
> In the hollow Lotus-land to live and lie reclined
> On the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind . . .
> Where they smile in secret looking over wasted lands,
> Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps and fiery sands,
> Clanging fights and flaming towns, and sinking ships and praying hands.
> But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful song
> Like a tale of little meaning tho' the words are strong.

Strange, and deeply indicative, that the sturdy son of the manse and creator of Richard Hannay should have made his life a tale of so little meaning.

RICHARD COVENTRY

## THE LADIES

**Masks and Faces.** By PHYLLIS BOTTOME. *Faber.* 8s. 6d.

**Too Dear for My Possessing.** By PAMELA HANSFORD JOHNSON. *Collins.* 8s. 6d.

**A Footman for the Peacock.** By RACHEL FERGUSON. *Cape.* 8s.

**The Stone of Chastity.** By MARGERY SHARP. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.

Contemporary fiction is to a very considerable extent written by, and for, women. Appropriately, this year is the bicentenary of Fanny Burney: it was Fanny's first book, spreadeagling London with its instant success, which brought the lady-novelist in sight of parity with the men. Fanny's successors—Jane Austen, the Brontës, George Eliot, Mrs. Gaskell, Olive Schreiner, Dorothy Richardson, Katherine Mansfield, Virginia Woolf—make an impressive list, proof in themselves that of the various forms of artistic creation it is Fiction which women have chosen as the most amenable to them. The writing of romances was to the eighteenth-century woman what dressmaking was to the Victorian—the last genteel weapon of the impoverished. To-day it ranks, along with film-starring and doctoring, among the favourite careers of ambitious girls. A woman barrister is still a novelty, a woman priest is not yet possible, but the lady-novelist is a national figure.

The books on my list are tolerably representative of feminine talent, though I regret there is no specimen of Miss Du Maurier's *neo-brontesquerie* to do justice to the Stars of Tripe. Miss Phyllis Bottome, I feel, has had less recognition than she deserves. Unless I am mistaken, her name has not got into the select anthologies and quarterly articles on Novelists To Watch. Vogue is a capricious thing, but I hope Miss Bottome will find it with *Masks and Faces*. This is a collection of short stories, admirably written and with the further merit of having an unforced unity of theme. The "Masks" of the title are the disguises of our character which we sometimes make, the "Faces" are our honest reality. Each story presents a Mask or a Face, and we are left to judge which it is. Miss Bottome, I should add, is the biographer of Alfred Adler, and her preoccupation is with psychological incident. One or two of the stories are directly concerned with psychiatry, but I must be quick to explain that Miss Bottome's stories are primarily *stories*—as they should be—and not applications of theory to human dummies. Indeed, Miss Bottome's principal gift is her ability to sketch a rounded, credible and unhackneyed character in a few easy strokes. Technically this is a deceptively simple book. There are no fireworks, no mannerisms of style (apart from an excessive use of "rather"), no attempt to be spectacular. Like Miss Compton-Burnett, Miss

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Bottome does not quarrel with her limitations. She never uses a tool that she can't handle easily and comfortably. This, unfortunately, will not astonish the groundling, but I believe there are very few living writers who move so swiftly, with such a fluent line, and still keep such a decent cutting edge on their words. Nothing essential is omitted or left blurred; and what is perhaps more difficult, very little that is inessential is allowed to weaken the outline. The story called *Caesar's Wife's Ear*, with its vivid portrayal of circus lions and their trainer, is magnificently done. Throughout the book Miss Bottome commands a freshness and buoyancy of phrase which are exhilarating, and her characters are constantly held under the concentration of an alert intelligence. For me, at any rate, *Masks and Faces* will be one of the memorable books of this year.

Pamela Hansford Johnson belongs, with R. C. Hutchinson and Romilly Cavan, to a new generation of respectably popular novelists who are just arriving, or have just arrived. In this novel she writes in the first person, as a boy and later as a man: a difficult feat of male impersonation which is strikingly successful and which must inevitably be labelled *tour de force*. The autobiographical hero, Claud, is a sensitive boy with a taste for painting, who lives with his father and step-mother at Bruges. Returning to England, he makes a somewhat insipid marriage, but his imagination is still haunted by the memory of a young girl, Cecil, whom he had met during childhood; this early romantic vision reappears once or twice as a successful cabaret-star, and Claud's marriage begins to crumble. A sentiment of kindness towards his wife robs him of any effective resolution and he is still wobbling when the cabaret-star incontinently dies, whereupon his wife discovers that she, too, has fallen in love and withdraws her objection to divorce, allowing Claud to return to that introspective solitude which he should, perhaps, never have left.

This is a full-fathoms-five novel to drown in, ample in dimension, leisurely and detailed in development, packed with carefully elaborated characterisation and incident. The recollections of a boyhood in Bruges have an individual atmosphere and a sharpness of vision which carry full conviction, and it is in describing these early years that Miss Johnson is most satisfying to read. But there is a disturbing undercurrent, even in the best of the opening chapters: a portentousness of address and a further vagueness beyond each attempt at precision, which remind one increasingly of Charles Morgan. The young artist in a luminous afterglow of reminiscence, already shadowed with philosophising—it is *Portrait in a Mirror* which comes to mind as the most apt comparison. And sure enough, with Claud's puberty accomplished, Miss Johnson can find no objective but the agonised adultery of morganatic marriage. Cecil, the magnetic cabaret-singer, embodies nothing more than the Tin Pan Alley truism that Glamorous rhymes with Amorous. Claud, deliciously motionless between his *Fata Morgana* and the kind crumbs of dull marriage, reduces both his women to tears and offers a pocket-handkerchief. This is, of course, a tragic human situation—or at least a pathetic one—and I do not belittle it. But the novelist who is satisfied with it in terms of the *mystique* of Romance is merely adding density to an existing fog. And here is the difference between Miss Johnson and Miss Bottome. It is not that Miss Johnson is notably inferior in the craft of story-telling—she is in some respects better equipped, for example, in inventiveness of detail and in narrative stamina—but that her conception of character and moral situation is entirely commonplace. There are good moments in *Too Dear for my Possessing*, careful observation, moments of insight into human behaviour, promising scenes; but they all wash down to a couple of novelette profiles moaning over an investigation of former lovers:

> "Oh, Cecy, were there many others?"
>
> Meanly, ashamed of myself, I urged her to tell me how many.
>
> "Three," she said, humouring me as if I were a curious child, "but I was in love every time."

There are, to put it mildly, comic possibilities in that dialogue. A novelist, who neither exploits those possibilities satirically nor takes the precaution of suppressing them, is just riding on the tide with both oars gone.

Miss Ferguson and Miss Sharp, in their different ways, are wits; and wit seems to me the genre most alien to the feminine temperament, which is seldom sardonic, seldom keeps its anger on ice, and seldom flirts comfortably with disillusionment. There is Mae West (*non angela sed Los Angeles*) who has at last reconciled Oscar Wilde and the homely millions, but the usual lady wit is either verbally facetious or is engaged in that kind of protective satire which destroys only what is quite beyond repair and so distracts attention from the larger target.

*A Footman for the Peacock* has a neat mystery about a running footman of the coaching days who returns in the form of a peacock to trouble the descendants of his employers. This is an entertaining idea, but it is constantly pushed into the background by the many members of the household who are all busy being charmingly helpless in wartime conditions. Miss Ferguson has a lot of jolly *Punch*-like fun with them; but, of course, they are all *dears* really, nice people with nice habits, who seem to smile amiably while on their behalf Miss Ferguson proceeds to demolish and abandon a number of positions of no strategic importance. The English sense of humour, directed against ourselves with a quiet understanding of what is above the belt, and what below, is a remarkably successful defence; like a stage punch, it draws enough red ink to satisfy the prosecution but leaves us in good fettle for to-morrow's matinée.

*The Stone of Chastity* is light farce, expertly handled. An eccentric professor (and how eccentric an uneccentric professor would be in fiction!) discovers a stone which causes fallen women to fall again (but this time literally, into the brook) if they step on it. An ardent field-worker, the professor wants the village ladies to try their luck. That is the lay-out of the story, and it bowls along at a good farcical speed according to formula. Miss Sharp has a slick touch with this sort of thing, and *The Stone of Chastity* is a sprightly Bloomsbury joke of the usual sort—daffy yokels, gossiping old women, a dash of Anglo-Saxon naughtiness, a cockeyed view of Merrie Englande from the week-end cottage.

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## WISE MAN AND FOOL

**Scattering Branches.** Tributes to the Memory of W. B. Yeats. Edited by Stephen Gwynn. *Macmillan.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

A collection of tributes to the memory of a recently deceased great man is a pious but unpromising scheme, and these essays on Yeats only at moments relieve our forebodings. Each writer scatters his branch on the grave and is gone before there is time for the reader to have much more than the fleeting impression that the leaves are artificial and the twigs bound round with silver paper. The number of nice things to be said are limited; no wonder the writers tend to repeat each other. However, a few penetrating remarks are made: and the somewhat harsh voice of Maud Gonne speaks with a far greater authority and respect than all the others, and not without a trace of bitterness, more sincere and intimate than the flattery of others. She reproaches the dead man for having forsaken Ireland, and her words are full of that anger which makes one realise that no political grievance dies by being merely settled: it goes on in the minds of its exponents until they are in their graves.

This book could have been better edited. Each writer should have been given a limited subject and told to stick to it. As it is, most of the writers cover too much ground, generalise too much, deal with the same topics, contradict each other even. But Cecil Day Lewis sticks to his subject, "Yeats and the Aristocratic Tradition," and has something to say; and F. R. Higgins is always good about his fellow poet. Lennox Robinson and W. G. Fay write as though it were generally accepted that Yeats was a great dramatist, whereas L. A. G. Strong comes out with the remark that his plays are "the least satisfactory part of his work." Such disagreement would matter little if some attempt were made to arrive at a critical estimate of Yeats as man, poet, and dramatist. But in the pious atmosphere of admiration everyone assumes that everyone is agreed, where really there is little agreement.

What is amusing is that most of the contributors who knew Yeats are so much on the defensive. This may seem curious, because undoubtedly Yeats wrote some of the best poetry of his time, he led a life of devotion to his art, he was a respected public figure. The trouble is that his admirers confuse great achievements with greatness of a universal kind. Yeats wrote great poetry; he ought therefore, they feel, to have been a great man in the sense that Goethe was. To compare the old age of Goethe with that of Yeats is revealing. Goethe occasionally showed bad judgment, he occasionally talked boringly, but his was a great mind at the very centre of his time, into which the whole tradition of Europe flowed, and which was illuminated from every side by all the knowledge, all the historic events, all the experience of his time. In his conversations with Eckermann he brings light to bear on almost every subject he

touches on. The only things Goethe eschewed were the profoundly disturbing and disastrous truths which might upset the order of that vast sorting house of past, present and future which was his life at Weimar. He was quite clear-sighted, though, even about this; his view was that civilisation was heading towards catastrophe, and he did not want his own vision distorted in anticipation of events which would happen after he was dead.

If the aristocratic life and work of Goethe is like an eighteenth-century building with windows on every side, Yeats is like such a building, one aspect of which is well preserved, but which from every other angle is seen to be choked with weeds, ruined by time, battered by revolutions, torn by every gale. In order to keep up the grandiose single façade a tremendous propaganda goes on; the frustrated love, the aristocratic background, the mystic symbols, the Irish lilt, the romantic gestures, the rhetoric, the egotism, are all paraded and dramatised to the furthest possible degree. They served their purpose: they enabled this poetry, which is so limited, so bigoted, so blind, so loud, so impassioned, so much a façade, nevertheless to achieve greatness and even to attach to itself a great hunk of reality which we have to recognise as an image of a part of our life, however limited.

The writers in this book skirt round the fact that a great deal of Yeats was humbug. The least happy, and the least humorous, attempt is that of L. A. G. Strong to defend humbug by pretending that it is platitude:

> "Yeats," he says, "drew less distinction than do most men between what everyone sees, which we call reality, and what only a few see, which we call illusion. Suppose, for instance, that of ten people taken to a room in a so-called haunted house, nine felt a vague discomfort, and the tenth saw a toad as big as a calf which jumped at him out of a corner. Most people would distinguish, at least in degree, between the reality of the toad and that of the furniture in the room. Yeats would, I believe, have made little, if any, distinction."

One can hardly imagine that Yeats would have been grateful for Mr. Strong's B.B.C. Uncle way of reducing his magic to meaninglessness. The answer to Mr. Strong is that people who make no distinction between reality and illusion are lunatics. To prove that Yeats was a harmless kind of lunatic is not helpful. The point is that Yeats insisted that there were two different kinds of reality, not to be confused, and he claimed to have experiences of a little-explored reality which was not just a confusion of figures of speech with real objects. If people at séances see something, whatever it may be, it is not illustrations of literary metaphors. But Mr. Strong's essay really does illustrate one thing strikingly: the environment of pretentious nonsense which surrounded A. E. and Yeats.

There was one man who was not afraid to portray this in an absolutely unforgettable book—George Moore in *Ave, Salve, Vale*. Mr. Strong's comment on Moore is this:

> Just as he enraged a virtuous and tolerant choirmaster by saying that he loved not music but choirboys, just as he moved even A. E. to protect himself at law against a projected chapter of *Ave, Salve, Vale*, which alleged that he neglected his wife in favour of another lady—both allegations being fantastically baseless—he struck Yeats the unforgivable blow of putting pompous and silly sayings in his mouth: and he was not forgiven.

The only comment to make on this is that I hope the unveracity of the first two statements does not depend on that of the third—because Yeats did undoubtedly frequently say pompous and silly things. George Moore's portrait of Yeats, unflattering though it be, has the supreme merit of truth: so that the picture of Yeats will live, a great, sympathetic, often silly man, in George Moore's prose, long after Mr. Strong's far more adulatory tribute is forgotten.

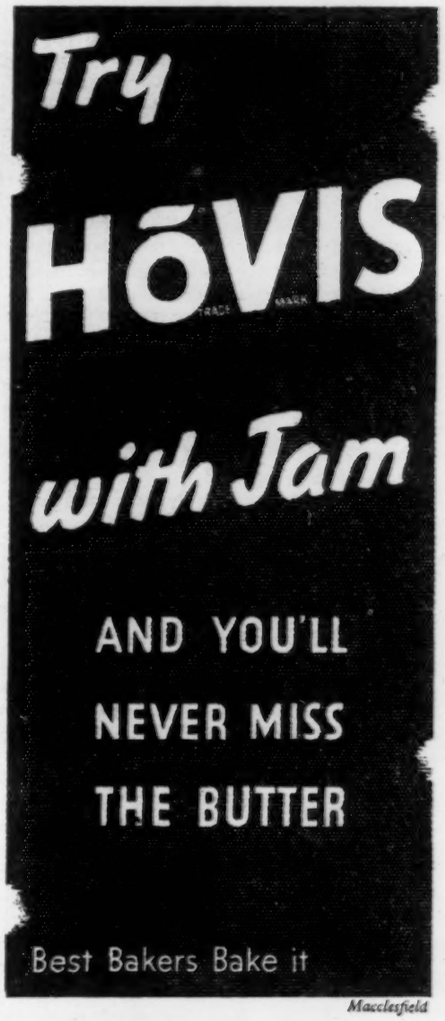
STEPHEN SPENDER

## THE SPANISH WAR

**Freedom's Battle.** By J. ALVAREZ DEL VAYO. *Heinemann.* 15s.

"Del Vayo?" said a British politician when I went to Spain in 1937, "he must be regarded for practical purposes as an agent of the Third International." Del Vayo? says the *Daily Worker*, reviewing *Freedom's Battle* in 1940—he is a "lickspittle" of British imperialism. Take your choice for absurdity. Del Vayo in 1940 is the same persistently courageous, honest and cheerful fellow that he was in 1937; a Spanish patriot as well as a militant Socialist, he foresaw very clearly the fate of Spain and of Europe if Fascism was allowed to destroy the Spanish Republic. In 1937 the one Power that gave effective aid to the Spanish Government was Russia, and largely for that reason the Negrin Government worked closely with the Communist Party. At that time the Communists believed in the Popular Front, and still hoped for a change of Government in Britain and a change of heart in France that would save Spain from Fascism and lead to a genuine alliance between Russia and the Western democracies. As the hypocrisy and futility of the Non-Intervention Committee became increasingly obvious and it became clearly impossible to induce British and French capitalists to see that their interests lay in defeating Franco, Stalin lost hope of co-operating with the West and Russian help for the Spanish Government dwindled. In 1939 the U.S.S.R. abandoned its Western policy and made terms with the Nazis, leaving Socialists in Western Europe to survive as best they can. When, in 1940, Del Vayo once again warns Britain that Franco is no free agent, but hopes that Spain may remain at least nominally neutral, he is no more capitalism's "lickspittle" than the Communists were when they demanded a Popular Front and called for Mr. Churchill before the Anglo-German war began. The present Communist attack on Del Vayo, whom they used to applaud as one of the finest fighters against Fascism, is all the more disgusting because he himself is studiously restrained. He could, if he wished, unfold a singularly damaging story of Communist behaviour during the latter days of the Spanish war. But it is one of the distinguishing marks of this book that its author, who has plenty of cause for bitterness, avoids personal attacks and tells the story of the Spanish war with a dignified objectivity that is as welcome as it is rare.

Del Vayo was Foreign Minister and War Minister and the chief international spokesman of the Spanish Republic. No one is in a better position to offer the world "sensational revelations." He deliberately refrains. Instead, we have a lucid and authoritative narrative in which evidence is produced in order to convince and not to startle. If there are still any who believe that Franco's rebellion was improvised to meet some Red plot and precipitated by the murder of Sotelo, they will revise their estimate after reading Del Vayo's factual account of the conspiracy in which the leading Spanish generals as early as 1935 were planning to overthrow the democracy which they had sworn to uphold. One gets a revealing impression of Señor Azaña, the Prime Minister, who thought ironic evasions the right counter both to the Army leaders, who urged stronger measures against "Bolshevism," and to the workers' delegations, which expressed their concern about the dubious loyalty of the Army leaders. Del Vayo is no less illuminating about the hasty measures of defence taken by the common people when the rebellion took place; about the problems of financing the war and of deciding whether the efficiency of a general outweighed the disadvantage of his unpopularity; about the defects and qualities of Prieto and Caballero; about Negrin's cool and justified decision to launch



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what seemed the desperate attack on the Ebro, and about the underhand dealing of Casado and the final confusion and disaster. In one remarkable passage he explains that when the war was obviously lost for lack of material to fight with, he and Señor Azcarate, the Spanish Ambassador in Britain, repeatedly sent telegrams to Negrin seeking authority to use British offers to negotiate when complete capitulation might still have been avoided. They received no reply for the good reason that the Army *Junta*, which had for some time been defeatist, prevented these telegrams from reaching Negrin. Casado, ambitious and disloyal, preferred to negotiate with Franco behind the Government's back. Like Marshal Pétain he seems naïvely to have hoped for an honourable peace from the Fascist enemy.

The results in Spain drained to the dregs the wine of bitter prophecy. Señor Del Vayo writes without exaggeration or vehemence of Franco's Spain. It is the most miserable of countries; desperately impoverished, once again saddled with the worst evils of clericalism and landlordism, deprived of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The reforms of the Republic have as far as possible been swept away; the new dawn of economic freedom, of popular education, the rise of the liberal arts, the stirring life of an oppressed people who have begun to see more than the shadows on the walls of their prison—these have been crushed so that Italy should be the better able to make war on the British Empire in the Mediterranean and Germany win the harbours and mineral wealth and air bases which rendered France finally helpless and which are the jumping-off places for Hitler's projected expansion in Africa, and perhaps across the Atlantic. Human history knows few more sorry stories. Even the past admirers of Franco admit that he has shown no sign of statesmanship or constructive ability. The gaols of Spain are full—Del Vayo quotes recent figures suggesting that there is still a political prisoner population of about a million—and the executions run into scores of thousands. One contrasts this with the firm suppression by the Government of the irregular troops who assassinated Fascist sympathisers and the long Cabinet meetings described by Del Vayo in which, even when the battle was desperate, the Negrin Cabinet discussed at length the evidence on which each death sentence was based, lest one man should die unjustly and the honour of the Republic be smirched by one authentic case of an unjust execution. Del Vayo answers many lies in this quiet and dignified story. And he is equally convincing when in conclusion he recalls that Spain has been crushed and not conquered. The length and heroism of Spanish resistance gives reasonable ground for hope that Spanish democracy will rise again before very long. As Del Vayo remarks: "The history of the Spanish people is full of audacity, courage and surprises."

KINGSLEY MARTIN

## CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY

**Science and Wisdom.** By JACQUES MARITAIN. *Bles.* 10s. 6d.

This book falls into two parts. The first consists of three lectures delivered by M. Maritain at Rome in 1934, entitled respectively Science and Wisdom, The Philosophy of Nature, and The Philosophy of Faith; the second, entitled Reflections on Moral Philosophy, curtains a development of M. Maritain's position in the light of the criticisms advanced by Catholic theologians of the views put forward in the lectures and elsewhere.

M. Maritain is the leading contemporary exponent of the Catholic philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, which sought to reconcile and to synthesise the wisdom of the classical philosophers with the insight of the Christian saints in a "Harmony of the Wisdoms." It is difficult for one who does not accept M. Maritain's theological premises, is unacquainted with the highly technical, theological controversies in which he engages and unversed in his nice distinctions, to do full justice to his position; nor is the task rendered easier by M. Maritain's abstract style of writing, at times rhetorical to the point of floweriness.

M. Maritain's thesis I take to be in outline as follows. There is an obvious distinction between a science, which endeavours to accumulate knowledge in regard to a particular department of what exists, and a philosophy (which M. Maritain calls a Wisdom) which seeks to comprehend the whole. In fact, however, the line between them is difficult to draw and has always been drawn differently. The difficulties and differences of demarcation arise largely from the fact that "Wisdoms," that is to say, ways of conceiving the whole, differ among themselves. Thus there is an Old Testament "Wisdom," a Hindu "Wisdom" and a Greek "Wisdom." Each of these is considered by M. Maritain and its errors and inadequacies are indicated. Thus Greek Wisdom culminated in a barren search pursued by rational methods for essences in the world of being combined with an irrational abandonment of reason to ecstasy as the appropriate attitude of the soul to a hypothetical world beyond reason, an abandonment which, in the Middle Ages, paved the way for the occultist and the magician.

M. Maritain seeks to illustrate the same thesis by reference to the contemporary situation. Descartes effected a separation between mind and body, spirit and matter; the body was of this world and was matter, the spirit, which was of the next, belonged to God. The result was to effect a new split between science and wisdom, a split which ran so deep that philosophy was itself divided. Part of it, that part which admits the existence of another world, became the close preserve of the Church, and under the name of theology continued not as reasoning, but as dogma. Another part, excluding the notion of another world, developed a humanist wisdom which, taking man as the measure of all things, not only regarded him as being the centre of the universe, but slipped in the implication that the sole function of the rest of the universe was to put man in its centre. The Cartesian split had results no less disastrous upon human consciousness. Whereas the Christian method of self-knowledge, the method of wisdom, is that of finding oneself by losing oneself in love and service, the method of science splits the human consciousness into two and, in the name of psychology, seeks to find the self by setting half the self to introspect the other half.

What is the moral? First, that a "Wisdom" which leaves God out of its account of the whole is falsified in respect of its account of every part, precisely because God pervades every part. Secondly, that God must enter not only into what is understood, but also into the effort to understand. Wisdom, therefore, cannot be won either by asceticism or mysticism or intellectual effort; it can only be vouchsafed by the grace of God. "As it is a matter of entering into the depths of God, how could it be even conceivable, if God Himself did not take the initiative with a free gift."

The conclusion is that the philosopher cannot succeed even as a philosopher except he find first the way of salvation.

I have only indicated one strand in the complex pattern of thought which M. Maritain weaves on the loom of his faith. Granted the faith, then for all I know—for I have been able to trace it but ill—the pattern is a transcript of the real. Lacking it, one sees in this imposing structure of argument and conclusion no pattern at all, but only the pieces of an unassembled jigsaw.

C. E. M. JOAD

**British Industry: Its Changing Structure in Peace and War.** By M. COMPTON and E. H. BOTT. *Lindsay Drummond.* 15s.

This book does not live up to its pretentious title, and it is not worth 15s. It is, however, a handy and quite competent summary of current statistical data relating to the principal British industries, and of recent legislative and other measures of industrial reorganisation. It has useful chapters on "The Finance of Industry" and on Labour questions; and it is plentifully sprinkled with references to sources and indications for further reading. It is, however, essentially an elementary book; and for this reason the high price of publication seems likely to defeat its object. It would do excellently as a textbook for a W.E.A. Class or for University students in their first year. One suspects, indeed, that it has arisen out of some extra-mural course of lectures, and that the students for whom it was prepared found themselves very well served.

## GRAMOPHONE NOTES

WASTING records in wartime should be penalised on the same lines as wasting food. To have published a recording of Brahms' *'Cello Sonata in F*, Op. 99, made nearly three years ago, at the precise moment when Decca issue a set of the same work, was, on the part of the Gramophone Co., ungracious, to say the least of it. And I am sorry to say that there is no comparison possible between the two versions, for that of H.M.V. is by Casals and Horszowski. The sonata itself is Brahms at his gravest and most abstruse; I feel myself that the first movement, with its magnificently sinewy opening theme, the lines of which seem to have been drawn by the genius of the instrument, is one of the finest in all chamber music; violent in light and shadow, a complex pattern of bone and muscle, it recalls a Blake illustration to Milton. All four movements are in themselves superb; yet, as so often with Brahms, the balance between them is imperfect: the Scherzo, with its long Trio, is too heavily weighted for the comparatively short Finale, and this in turn recalls—most inappropriately—those Allegretto movements which do duty for Scherzos in the first three symphonies. A work in sonata form should be a snake that bites its tail; there is nothing in this graceful little Finale to remind us of the darkly dramatic opening movement. Casals' performance could not well be more magisterial than it is: his initial attack; his long, legato phrasing in the slow movement; his triple stopping, which sounds like a whole body of 'cellos—all these contribute to an unforgettable experience. From a recording point of view my only criticism is that the piano part is rather pushed into the background, as if it were a mere accompaniment. After these splendours, the rendering by William Pleeth and Margaret Good (Decca) is an inevitable disappointment. In any case these excellent performers here do themselves less than justice, taking the whole work too fast and giving it less weight than it requires.

Of Mozart's two *Piano Quartets* the *G minor* is probably the finer; yet the *E flat* (K. 493) yields but little to it, especially after repeated hearings. The themes in themselves are curiously Beethovenian; but it is a mistake ever to judge a work by its themes, and what Mozart has done with these is characteristically genial and unexpected. The performance, by the Pasquier Trio and Hortense Monath (H.M.V.), is an extremely sensitive one and the recording leaves nothing to be desired. The same composer's *Horn Concerto in E flat* (K. 447) is the third of four written between 1782 and 1786 for the famous Salzburg horn-player, Ignaz Leutgeb. These concertos were dashed off at tremendous speed, but though they are light in feeling and full of musical jokes (e.g. the theme of the Andante of this concerto is used as the second subject of the Finale, played twice as fast) they are not in the least perfunctory and the writing for the solo instrument is masterly. Aubrey Brain, with the B.B.C. Orchestra under Sir

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THE POWERFUL SAFE PAINKILLER

Adrian Boult (H.M.V.), gives a most adroit and exciting performance.

Professor Donald Tovey, writing of Sibelius' Seventh Symphony, lets drop the following important remark: "Sibelius has not only mastered but made a system of that kind of movement which Wagner established for music-drama, and which the composers of symphonic poems before Strauss have often failed to achieve and have not always realised as essential to their problem." If this is borne in mind while listening to Tchaikovsky's *Francesca da Rimini*, the disproportion between the grandiosity of the material and orchestration, and the comparative feebleness of the result, becomes easier to understand. Complexity of organisation is essential to a symphonic poem, and Tchaikovsky's scheme is far too simple to convey the poetic vision involved. The picture is just not carried far enough. Thus the beginning and end are pure Cecil B. de Mille; those feverish chromatic figures succeeding one another in strict imitation are very dull to listen to *qua* music. The "love" section, however, brings a lovely theme and all the graceful ornamentation and modulation one associates with the composer's ballet music. Sir Thomas Beecham and the London Philharmonic Orchestra (Col.) do everything in their considerable power to bring out the qualities of the music. The same composer's *Hamlet Overture*, written much later in life, is a shorter and in many respects more satisfactory work, though the very Russian character of some of the themes creates an incongruous impression. It is interesting to note that the work opens with the same phrase as that associated with *Francesca* in the earlier fantasia; whether or not this was intentional I have no idea. The recording, also by the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Antal Dorati (H.M.V.), is an adequate one. This inexpensive record of a rarely heard work should be of interest to collectors.

Liszt's *Spanish Rhapsody*, though not among his best or most popular compositions, is yet a work of much charm and brilliance. A contemporary of the two *Légendes*, it was written in 1863 as a piano solo; but the version at present under review is that devised for piano and orchestra by Busoni. This, in the present writer's opinion, is a definite gain. As in the case of Schubert's *Wanderer Fantasie*, the nature of the music seems to demand the essentially dramatic form of the concerto to realise its fullest expression. Busoni's layout and instrumentation are both extremely clever; Egon Petri plays the solo with the utmost brilliance; the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos (Col.), gives a competent performance; but the recording is below the average in clarity of outline and seems, for an American one, rather lacking in punch. The exact opposite is true of a new disc of Weber's *Invitation à la Valse*, played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Weingartner (Col.). The orchestral version (Weingartner's own) contains some added cadenzas and a few transitional bars; but these will, I think, only be disapproved by purists. A dazzling record.

A new recording of Sibelius' beautiful little *Romance in C*, by Sir Adrian Boult and the B.B.C. Strings, will be welcome to anyone who happens to have missed Boyd Neel's recording, made some five years ago. The more recent one has greater depth and richness of texture. This is easy music to listen to, but its simplicity is not the kind of which one tires. On the other hand, I am not sure that the same would be true of Respighi's *Third Suite of Ancient Airs and Dances*. The arrangement is in good taste (not invariably this composer's strong point), but the superficial charm of the music covers a certain insipidity which might pall after a time. The recording and performance, by the Boyd Neel ensemble (Decca), are well up to standard.

I will end this list of orchestral records with two enchanting diversions: the Overture to Rossini's *L'Italiana in Algeri*, played by the E.I.A.R. Orchestra (Parl.), and Johann Strauss' *Emperor Waltz*, played by the Boston Orchestra (H.M.V.). The first, though good enough, is overshadowed by Toscanini's blazing performance (H.M.V.)—a record which is by no means out of date. The second, too, is hardly the equal of Bruno Walter's rendering, which may, however, be now unobtainable. The present recording has a disagreeable echo. This waltz is not one of Strauss' very best; but if some of the tunes are a bit weak, the hand of the master is almost always obvious in the manipulation of them.

After a recent lapse, Eileen Joyce appears at her best again in Chopin's most famous *Ballade*—that in *A flat* (Parl.). This is a very clever performance—delicate and low in tone, with no attempt at masculine dynamics. One could wish that more women pianists had the wit to make use of the virtues peculiar to their sex, instead of always trying to sound as much as possible like men. Miss Joyce, who can, on occasion, beat male pianists on their own ground, deserves the highest praise for thus throwing new light on a too familiar piece. Her playing, again, of Beethoven's *Bagatelle*, Op. 33, No. 2, and the Schumannesque *Für Elise* (Parl.) is distinguished and original. She takes the latter piece rather slower than Schnabel and very smoothly, reserving brilliance for the curious *sauts d'humeur* in the *Bagatelle*—one of those pieces which express most interestingly the cross, churlish side of Beethoven's character. To hear the other side one has only to turn to a 10 in. disc of the *Adelaide*, sung by Jussi Björling (H.M.V.). It is customary to frown upon this aria as "uncharacteristic," "Italianate," "feeble," and in general to instance it as proof that writing for the voice bored Beethoven. But while it is true that the song is conventional in form (Adagio—Allegro—Stretta), the voice-line is beautifully expressive and the themes have that combination of sweetness and strength which perfectly translates the simple rapture of the words. As an example, too, of the transition from the classical operatic aria to the strophic song of Schubert and Schumann, *Adelaide* is of historical importance. Björling's rendering is particularly good: he has the right kind of tenor voice and never yields to the temptation to dot i's and cross t's, which can ruin this song. The piano accompaniment, however, is rather jaunty and insensitive, and at moments inadequately powerful.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

# Week-end Competitions

## No. 551

### Set by William Whitebait

We offer a First Prize of two guineas and a Second Prize of half a guinea for the best clerihews on animals. Competitors may send in as many examples as they wish, but one verse will be enough to qualify for a prize.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, Sept. 6.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

## RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 549

### Set by Zita Crossman

A popular novelty, according to the newspapers, is to have engraved on your wedding ring an inscription appropriate to your occupation; thus Airmen are reported to have chosen "Happy Landings!" Sailors, "Jack's the boy!" etc. The usual prizes are offered for the best half-dozen inscriptions suitable to the following occupations: Air-Raid Warden; Buchmanite; Parachutist; War Office Major; Butcher; Nippy; Mass Observer; University Don; Competition Setter; Popular Novelist; Engine Driver; Leader Writer; Dance Hostess; Mr. Sensible; B.B.C. Announcer; Fifth Columnist.

### Report by Zita Crossman

There was a huge number of competitors anxious to inscribe wedding rings, but the popularity of various occupations differed greatly. The Engine Driver and the Nippy were prime favourites and Mr. Sensible—an indefinite character, anyway—far the most unpopular. Both Dons and B.B.C. Announcers were given a rather curateish complexion, while in the imagination of our competitors Dance Hostesses led the most lurid of lives. Popular Novelists, Leader Writers and Buchmanites were generally disliked. On the whole, the easiest successes were scored with Fifth Columnists and Parachutists.

I have had to rule out many witty remarks because they were not suitable for *wedding*-rings. Imagine wearing as the bride of a popular novelist, "What a sell"!

Here, before coming to the prizewinners, are some of the best:

| | |
|---|---|
| Air-raid Warden.. | To Bed with My Siren. |
| Buchmanite .. | All change. |
| | All this and Heaven too. |
| | God Huntin'. |
| Parachutist .. | Swing low, sweet chariot. |
| | Date with an Angel. |
| | Feet first. |
| War Office Major | True to Tape. |
| Butcher .. .. | Heart's Blood for you. |
| | My heart is tender. |
| | Unrationed bliss. |
| | Clean cut. |
| Nippy .. .. | Serve him right. |
| | A finger in every pie. |
| | Coeur-de-Lyons. |
| Mass Observer .. | Snoop to conquer. |
| | Good snooping. |
| University Don .. | Sweet are the uses of a 'Varsity. |
| | Ivory Towers. |
| | Nic-proctor; proctor hock! |
| | Quiet flows the Don. |
| Competition Setter | Many witty returns! |
| Popular Novelist.. | Happy Endings! |
| | 10,000 times 10,000. |
| Engine Driver .. | The permanent way. |
| | Smoke in your eyes. |
| Leader Writer .. | The genuine article. |
| Dance Hostess .. | Watch your step. |
| | Keep your partners. |
| Mr. Sensible .. | Every bullet has its bulletin. |
| | Mum's the word. |
| B.B.C. Announcer | Accents will happen. |
| | For the love of Mike. |
| Fifth Column .. | Watch and Prey. |
| | Hans across the sea. |

The First Prize goes to "Kind Vera," and the second to Edgar Holt, who runs very close.

FIRST PRIZE

| | |
|---|---|
| Butcher .. .. | In joint partnership. |
| Mass Observer .. | "Us." |
| University Don .. | For he's a jolly good Fellow. |
| Popular Novelist.. | Owner of sole reproduction rights. |
| Engine Driver .. | Couplin's done — Successful run! |
| Fifth Columnist.. | For Richer, for Fuehrer. |

"KIND VERA"

SECOND PRIZE

| | |
|---|---|
| Mass Observer .. | Here's snooping. |
| Nippy .. .. | My cup of tea. |
| Fifth Columnist.. | Quisle while you work. |
| War Office Major | It's all taped. |
| B.B.C. Announcer | Love's old sweet record. |
| Competition Setter | For Auld Laing Syne. |

EDGAR HOLT

# THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By CYNICUS

THE INFLATIONISM OF E.P.T.—ANGLO-IRANIAN OIL AGREEMENT—OIL AND POLITICS.

IT would improve national efficiency if the Stock Exchange were to close at two o'clock (like the banks) and allow its members to go to sleep comfortably at their offices and clubs instead of uncomfortably in "The House" as they now do every day from two to three. Markets are remarkably firm, but if stockbrokers had the dole there could not be greater idleness. Only the railway market continues to fall away as more and more investors come to realise that the railway agreement cannot be maintained in its present form. But this agreement is only an outward and visible sign (albeit the most conspicuous) of the inflationary trend of the Government's economic policy. It is more important for us to focus our attack upon the cause of the disease than upon the symptoms; and the root cause of it is, of course, the lack of agreement between Government and labour over wages. But a subsidiary cause of the disease of inflation is undoubtedly the Excess Profits Tax. I am continually attacking this tax as unfair because it is unequal. But I do not think it is generally recognised that the tax is grossly inflationary because it encourages wholesale spending—not only in travelling and consumption expenditures of business executives but in capital investment goods of all descriptions. I came across two engineering companies last week engaged on excellent war work but with no pre-war profit standard for E.P.T. These companies were handing out over 90 per cent. of their profits to the Government and leaving their shareholders with an inadequate return on capital employed in a highly speculative trade. The managements of these companies were frankly devoting their energies and brains to replacing their fixed assets and working equipment as far as possible out of expenses, that is, out of E.P.T. In other words they were spending much more than they normally would and forcing up the prices of tools and other investment goods. This urge to spend has taken hold of every board of directors up and down the country. In my view E.P.T. should be scrapped and trading companies and partnerships should be asked to help pay for the war by means of the National Defence Contribution, which is simply an extra tax on trading profits. If, in its place, the N.D.C. were increased from 5 per cent. to 25 per cent. the Inland Revenue would gain, there would be far less injustice to young and enterprising companies, and the stable and prosperously fat companies trading in consumption goods, such as tobacco and beer, would at last be made to contribute their fair share towards the cost of the war. But before scrapping E.P.T. the Government must have an honest settlement with labour.

* * *

It seems extraordinary that Lord Cadman in his speech to shareholders of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company on August 20th, did not refer to negotiations which had apparently been going on for some time for a revision of the company's agreement with Iran. According to the *Financial News* the Iranian Parliament has approved the terms of a new agreement under which the company will be called upon to pay duty for the years 1938 and 1939 on the basis of the payment made for 1937 and to pay a minimum of £4 millions per annum for 1940 and 1941. This will be a serious matter for the shareholders. In 1937 the company paid in royalty and tax to the Iranian Government £3,545,000, in 1938 £3,307,000 and 1939 £2,771,000, so that it will be called upon immediately to hand over more than £1,000,000. The shareholders must, of course, appreciate the point of view of the Iranian Government. This year the company would have paid considerably less in royalty and tax because, since Italy entered the war, its output of crude oil has fallen from the rate of around 4 million to 2 million tons a year. Under the 1933 agreement the Iranian Government received a royalty of 4s. per ton on all oil sold or exported from Iran and a sum equal to 20 per cent. of any distribution in excess of 5 per cent. on the ordinary stock. As the company cut its dividend last year from 20 per cent. to 5 per cent. Iran could only look forward in the war years to 4s. per ton on a rapidly diminishing tonnage of oil. Its only protection under the 1933 agreement was a saving clause against a depreciation in sterling and a minimum royalty of £750,000 a year. It is good that the Shah and the company have come to terms, but after 1941 the Government's position is again to be reviewed with a view to "mutual agreement for subsequent years." The shareholders may be thankful that the British Government itself holds the majority of the ordinary stock, namely, over £11,000,000 out of £20,000,000. The Iranian Government cannot therefore be as unpleasant to the company as the Mexican Government has been to American and British oil companies and the Roumanian Government to British and Dutch interests. It is impossible to foresee what the relations between the Iranian Government and the company may be after the war, for that depends upon the outcome of the war in the Near East, but I would hope that a victorious British Government, trying to reconstruct a better order of things, will realise the indelicacy of the British tax-payer (or shall we say the Admiralty?) exercising control of the oil industry in a foreign country. For the moment I would not care to hold any Anglo-Iranian Oil share except the first preference shares.

Company Meeting

## ALLIED BAKERIES LTD.

THE fifth annual general meeting of Allied Bakeries, Limited, was held on August 23rd in London.

Mr. W. Garfield Weston, M.P. (the Chairman), said that the operating companies had maintained a steady trend of increasing business despite the war, but continuing increases in material and labour costs had not been offset by an increase in the price of bread. Regulations restricting the area of deliveries had curtailed normal expansion, but large scale evacuation had not appreciably affected the company, and total sales had been increased.

In the event of intensive air raids the geographical layout of the organisation afforded an apparent advantage which the company was prepared to place at the disposal of the baking industry. To prevent interference with a vital food service in the event of serious damage to or total destruction of other bakeries the use of the Operating Company's bread plants would, as far as possible, be made available to secure their lost production at cost.

Provision for taxation for the Group amounted to £340,000, but as some of the companies had commenced trading within comparatively recent years, an unduly large proportion of their normal trading profits were deemed to be excess profits.

An extensive programme of modernisation and re-equipment of bakeries was nearing completion; the expenditure this year would be largely devoted to the maintenance of plant at a high degree of efficiency. Stocks were considerably higher this year because of increased costs of ingredients and the carrying of larger stocks of flour in accordance with the Ministry of Food's desire to secure the wide distribution of accumulated reserves. Amounts due from Government departments and the normal increase in sales were the principal reasons for the increase in debtors. These changes had necessarily involved a drain on liquid resources, and loans from bankers had increased, but the readiness with which the company's bankers had agreed to make these advances, largely without security, was a tribute to the basic soundness of the organisation.

He concluded by paying a tribute to the loyal co-operation of his colleagues and staff.

The report and accounts were adopted.

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*St. Dunstan's is registered under the Blind Persons Act, 1920*

**The Lieutenant** *likes it . . .*

Take a glance at that Rock-of-Gibraltar chin, which our young lieutenant thrusts over the rail as he searches for enemy craft. Can you see there the mantle of Drake (minus the beard) and Nelson (plus an eye)? Well, at least the satin smooth skin shows that he's had a perfect Vinolia shave—indeed proves again that Vinolia rules the shaves.

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PURELY PERSONAL

IN THE MATTER OF BIXBY versus SNODGRASS take note the case has been settled over a couple of King Six Cigars. Few can resist the fine mellow flavour of these 8d. masterpieces.